HEAVEN
Taken by
STORM
OR,
The HOLY VIOLENCE a Christian is to put forth in the pursuit after Glory.

By THOMAS WATSON, Minister of the Gospel.

Phil. 3. 4. *I press toward the mark.*

Σὺ δὲ μὴ τοῦ στεφάνου ἀφίστασο, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἀγῶνα ἄνελε. Chrysost. de pœn. Hom. 1.

LONDON,
Printed by *R. W.* for *Tho. Parkhurst*
at the Sign of the *Bible and Three Crowns*
on *London-Bridge*, 1683.

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By THOMAS WATSON,
Minister of the Gospel.

Phil. 3. 4. I pray, forsaid the world.

LONDON,
Printed by R. W. for Tho. Parkhurst,
at the Sign of the Golden Bible
on London Bridge, 1670.

TO THE

Right Honourable,

Sir WILLIAM TURNER, Knight,

LORD MAYOR

OF THE

CITY of LONDON.

Right Honourable,

IT is the happiness of this City, to have a Magistrate that *bears not the Sword in vain.* Your place

is high; God hath lent you
* Psal. 82. 6. his *own Title* *: your work is great, it lies in the distribution of Justice, which (according to *Aristotle*) comprehends all vertues in it. And in this your high orb you have acted vigorously. Your good Government hath helped to raise, if not *London's* structures, yet its fame. My Lord, to be a κοινὸν ἀγαθὸν, *a publick Good*, will both render your life honourable, and your death comfortable*. God did reserve you for such a juncture of time as this.

* *Gratius est prodesse alii quàm magnas opes habere.* Cicero.

this. When is there more need of zeal in superiours, than when vice grows heady in inferiours. The subject I here humbly dedicate to your Lordship, is, *Violence for Heaven*. A Divine ἕξις, or temperature of soul to be much aspired after; for by this you may help to save not only your self, but others. Put on Integrity as a Robe; and let zealous violence more adorn you than the richest Chain of Gold. But I have cause to break forth into Panegyricks. Indeed your own

works praise you in the gates. Your prudence and courage, your impartiality in deciding Causes, your punishing of Oaths, and correcting the false ballance; your compliance with his Majesties Royal Proclamation against Healthdrinking, have erected for you a living monument in the hearts of all sober and pious men. Among other things, your Self-denial hath been eminent in letting go some of your Perquisites for the good of others.

Posse & nolle nobile est. Senec.

The former Governours that had been before me (saith *Nehemiah*) *were chargeable unto the people, and had taken of them Bread and Wine, &c. but so did not I.* What pity is it that *London* should, like *Sparta*, keep such a Governour but one year. My Lord, I hate *to give flattering titles*, Job 32. 22. but I have taken this boldness to say this little, both for your Lordship's encouragement, and the imitation

of those that shall succeed in your Chair. My Lord, this small Tractate comes under your Honours Patronage, and entreat your favourable perusal and acceptance of it; it was intended you sooner, but some emergent occasions intervening prevented. If this little spark shall give light or heat to any heart, I have my desire. The great God who hath placed you at the helm of this City, fill you with his heavenly benediction, and so animate you with all might by his Spirit in the inner

inner man, that you may be an *Eben-ezer*, a stone of help to us; that you may do worthily in *London*, and be famous in your Generation; so prayeth he who is,

Sir,

Your Servant in the Gospel,

July 9. 1669.

THO. WATSON

AN

The Epistle Dedicatory.

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Your Servant in
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THO. WATSON.

AN

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HEAVEN

Heaven taken by Storm.

MATTH. 11. 12.

The Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

John Baptiſt hearing in priſon the fame of Chriſt, ſends two of his Diſciples to him with this Queſtion, *Art thou he that ſhould come, or do we look for another?* verſ. 3. Not (as *Tertullian* thinks) that *John Baptiſt* knew not that Jeſus Chriſt was the True Meſſiah; for he was confirmed in this, both by the Spirit of God, and by a ſign from Heaven, *John* 1.33. But *John Baptiſt* hereby endeavoured to correct the ignorance of his own Diſciples, who had a greater reſpect for him than for Chriſt.

In the fourth Verse Christ answers their question, *Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the Lepers are cleansed*, &c. Jesus Christ demonstrates himself to be the true *Messiah*, by his Miracles, which were real and ocular proofs of his Divinity. *John's* Disciples being departed, Christ falls into an high elogium and commendation of *John Baptist*: Vers. 7. *What went ye out into the Wilderness to see; a reed shaken with the wind?* As if Christ had said, *John Baptist* was no unconstant man, fluctuating in his mind, and being shaken as a *Reed* from one opinion to another; * he was no *Reuben, unstable as water*, but was fixed and resolute in Religion, and a Prison could make no alteration in him.

* *Per arundinem cum sit mutanti examinis, & inconstanti vel levissimo vento succumbat, nunc hoc nunc illuc agitatur, intelligit Salvator hominem levem & instabilem, at talis Animus non erat* Johannes; *sed constans, & semper sui similis, nec in carcere quidquam suæ sententiæ mutavit.* Engenius.

Vers. *But what went ye out for to see, a man cloathed in soft raiment? John* did not indulge his senses; he wore not silks,

In Deserto vixit Johannes, ubi nullæ supputant vestium aut ciborum delicias, sed incultus pannus, asperi & squalida; non sunt homo mollis; id locus, id cibus, id vestis illius loquantur. Idem.

but

but *Camels hair*; nor did he affect to live at Court, but in a Wilderness, *Mat.* 3. 3, 4.

Again, Christ commends *John* as being his forerunner, who *prepared the way before him*, *verse* 10. He was the morning Star which did precede the Sun of Righteousness; and that Christ might sufficiently honour this holy man, he doth not only parallel him with, but prefer him before, the chief of the Prophets. *Verse.* 9. *What went ye out for to see, a Prophet? yea I say unto you, and more than a Prophet.* Vers. 11. *Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist.* He was eminent both for Dignity of Office, and Perspicuity of Doctrine; and so the Text is usher'd in: *From the dayes of John the Baptist, until now, the Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.* In which words there is,

1. The preface or introduction; *from the dayes of John the Baptist until now.* *John Baptist* was a zealous Preacher, a *Boanerges*, or Son of Thunder; and after his Preaching, People began to be awakened out of their sins.

Hence learn, what kind of Ministry is

like to do most good, namely, That which works upon the Consciences of men. *John Baptist did lift up his voice like a Trumpet*, he preached the Doctrine of Repentance with power, *Mat.* 3. 2. *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand:* He came hewing and cutting down mens sins, and afterwards preached Christ to them. First, He poured in the Vinegar of the Law, then the Wine of the Gospel. This was that preaching made men studiously seek after Heaven: *John* did not so much preach to please, as to profit; he chose rather to discover mens sins, than to shew his own eloquence. That is the best looking-glass, not which is most gilded, but which shews the truest face. That Preaching is to be preferred, which makes the truest discovery of mens sins, and shews them their hearts. *John Baptist was a burning and a shining light*; he did burn in his Doctrine, and shine in his Life; and from that time men pressed into Heaven. * *Peter* (who was filled with a spirit of zeal) having humbled his hearers for their sins, and opened to them a Fountain in Christs Blood, they were then *pricked at their heart*,

* *Johannes Christum & pœnitentiam prædicante, populus magno impetu accurrit ad oblatam gratiam.* Munsterus.

heart, * Act. 2. 37. 'Tis the greatest mercy to have a Soul-searching Ministry. If one had a desperate Wound, he would desire to have it searched to the bottom. Who would not be content to have their Souls searched, so they may have them saved?

* salutiferas.

2. The matter in the Text, *The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.* 2.

What is meant by the Kingdom of Heaven? Quest.

Some interpret it of the Doctrine of the Gospel, which reveals Christ and Heaven. So *Erasmus.* Resp. Nova Evangelii doctrina ad quam jam aliud confugiebat Judaismus. Erasm.

But I rather by the Kingdom of Heaven understand Glory: and so learned *Beza* and others.

This Kingdom *suffereth violence* *.

* Vim patitur.

'Tis a Metaphor from a Town or Castle that holds out in War, and is not taken but by storm *. So the Kingdom of Heaven will not be taken without violence; * *The violent take it by force.*

* Metaphora sumpta à Castris, vel ab Arce, quæ quapiam quæ irrumpentibus hostibus diripitur. Erugens. dam in illud perrumpitur. Junius.

The Earth is inherited by the *Meek*, *Mat.* 5. 5. Heaven is inherited by the *violent.*

last. Our life is military; Christ is our Captain, the Gospel is the Banner, the Graces are our spiritual Artillery, and Heaven is only taken in a forcible way. The words fall into two parts:

1. The Combate, *suffereth violence.*

2. The Conquest, *The Violent take it by force.*

Obser. *The right way to take Heaven is by Storm:* Or thus, *None get into Heaven but violent ones.* This violence hath a double act.

1. It concerns men as *Magistrates*; they must be violent *In punishing the nocent.* When *Aaron's Urim* and *Thummim* will do no good, then must *Moses* come with his *Rod.* The sicked are the bad humours and surfeit of the Common-wealth, which by the care of Magistracy are to be purged out. God hath placed Governours *for the terrour of evil doers,* 1 *Pet.* 2. 14. They must not be like the Sword-fish, which hath a Sword in his Head, but is without an Heart. They must not have a Sword in their Hand, but no Heart to draw it out for the cutting

cutting down of impiety. Connivance in a Magistrate supports vice, and by not punishing offenders he adopts other mens faults, and makes them his own*. Magistracy without zeal is like the body without spirits. Too much lenity emboldens sin, and doth but shave the head which deserves to be cut off.

* Qui non prohibet cum potest, jubet.

2. *In defending the Innocent.* The Magistrate is the *Asylum*, or Altar of Refuge, for the oppressed to fly to. *Charls* Duke of *Calabria*, was so in love with doing Justice, that he caused a Bell to be hung at his Palace gate, which whosoever did ring, was sure presently to be admitted into the Duke's presence, or have some Officers sent out to hear his cause. *Aristides* was famous for his Justice, of whom the Historian saith, he would never favour any mans cause because he was his friend, nor do injustice to any because he was his Enemy. The Magistrates ballance is the oppressed mans shield.

This violence concerns men as *Christians*. Though Heaven be given us freely, yet we must contend for it*, *Eccles.* 9. 10.

2.

* Soliciter & strenuè agendum

eò, ut in tanta rerum caritate cessandum, cum hæc una vis naturâ hominis digna sit, quæ omnes impetus omnes suas. Clarius.

What thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might. Our work is great, our time short, our Master urgent; we had need therefore summon together all the powers of our souls, and strive as in a matter of Life and Death, that we may arrive at the Kingdom above; We must not only put forth *diligence*, but *violence*. For the illustrating and clearing the Proposition, I shall shew,

1. 1. What violence is not meant here: This *violence* in the text excludes 1. An *ignorant violence*; to be violent for that which we do not understand, *Acts* 17.23. *As I passed by, and beheld your Devotions, I found an Altar with this Inscription,* Ἀγνώστῳ Θεῷ, *To the unknown God.* These *Athenians* were violent in their devotion; but it might be said to them, as Christ said to the Woman of *Samaria*, Joh. 4. 22. *Ye worship ye know not what.* Thus the Papists are violent in their Religion, witness their pennance, fasting, dilacerating themselves till the blood comes, but it is a *Zeal without Knowledge*: their Metal is better than their Eye-sight. When *Aaron* was to burn the Incense upon the Altar, he was first to *light the lamps*, *Exod.* 30.7. When

zeal

zeal like incense burns, first the lamp of knowledge must be lighted.

2. It excludes a bloody violence, which is two-fold: First, when one goes to lay violent hands upon himself. The body is an earthly prison, where God hath put the Soul; we must not break Prison, but stay till God by death lets us out. The Sentinel is not to stir without leave from his Captain: nor must we dare to stir hence, without *Gods* leave. Our Bodies are the Temples of the Holy Ghost, 1 *Cor.*6.19. when we offer violence to them, we destroy *Gods* Temple. The Lamp of life must burn so long as any natural moisture is left like oil to feed it.

Secondly, When one takes away the life of another. There's too much of this violence now adays. No sin hath a louder voice than blood, *Gen.*4.10. *The voice of thy Brothers Blood crieth unto me from the ground.* If there is a Curse for him that *smites his Neighbour secretly*, Deut. 27.24. then he is double cursed that kills him. If a man had slain another unawares, he might take Sanctuary, and fly to the Altar: but if he had done it willingly, the holiness of the place

Clamat in Cœlum vox sanguinis, &c.

was

was not to protect him, *Exod.* 21. 14. *If a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour to slay him with guile, thou shalt take him from mine Altar that he may die.* Joab being a man of blood, King *Solomon* fought to slay him, though he caught hold on the horns of the Altar, 1 *King.* 8. 29. In *Bohemia* formerly, the Murderer was to be beheaded, and put in the same Coffin with him whom he killed. Thus we see, what violence the Text excludes.

2. What violence is meant here; it is an *Holy Violence*. This is twofold.

1. We must be violent for the *Truth*. Here *Pilate's* question will be moved, *What is Truth?* Truth is either the blessed Word of God, which is called, ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, *The Word of Truth*. Or those Doctrines which are deduced from the Word, and agree with it as the Dial with the Sun, or the Transcript with the Original; as, the doctrine of the Trinity, the doctrine of the Creation, the doctrine of Free-grace, Justification by the blood of Christ, Regeneration, Resurrection of the dead, and the life of Glory: these *Truths* we must be violent for, which is either by being *Advocates* for them, or *Martyrs**. *Truth*

* *Pro iis quæ Cælum quam pro tali mamica veritatis.* Luther.

Truth is the most glorious thing; * the least filing of this gold is precious: what shall we be violent for, if not for Truth? Truth is *ancient*, it's gray hairs may make it venerable; it comes from him who is *the Ancient of daies*. * Truth is *unerring*, it is the *Star* which leads to Christ. Truth is pure, *Psal.* 119. 140. It is compared to *Silver refined* seven times, *Psal.* 12. 6. There is not the least spot on Truth's face, it breathes nothing but sanctity. Truth is *triumphant*; it is like a great Conquerour, when all its Enemies lie dead, it keeps the field, and sets up its Trophies of Victory *. Truth may be opposed, but never quite deposed. In the time of *Diocletian*, things seemed desperate, Truth ran low, soon after was the golden time of *Constantine*, and then truth did again lift up its head. When the Water in the *Thames* is lowest, an high tide is ready to come in. God is on Truth's side, and so long there is no fear but it will prevail: *The Heavens being on fire shall be dissolved*, 2 Pet. 3. 12. but not that Truth which came from Heaven, 1 *Pet.* 1. 25.

* Pulchrum est verum Christianorum quidem Helias Graecorum. Aug. Ep. ad Hier.

* Id verum quod primum. Tertull.

* μεγαλη της αληθειας ισχυς Chrys.

Truth

Truth hath noble Effects. *Truth* is the *Seed of the new birth.* God doth not regenerate us by Miracles or Revelations, but by the word of truth, *Jam.* 1.18. As truth is the breeder of grace, so the * feeder of it, 1 *Tim.* 4.6. *Truth sanctifies, John* 17.17. *Sanctifie them by thy Truth.* *Truth* is the Seal that leaves the print of its own Holiness upon us; it is both *speculum* and *lavacrum*, a Glass to shew us our blemishes, and a Laver to wash them away. *Truth makes us free, John* 8.32. it beats off the fetters of sin, and puts us into a state of *Sonship, Rom.* 8.11. and Kingship, *Rev.* 1.6. Truth is *comforting*; this Wine cheers. When *David's* Harp and Viol could yield him no comfort, Truth did, *Psal.* 119.50. *This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy Word hath quickned me.* *Truth* is an *antidote against error.* Errour is the Adultery of the Mind; it stains the Soul, as *Treason* doth the Blood. Errour damns as well as Vice. A man may as well die by Poyson, as Pistol; and what can stave off Errour but *Truth?* The reason so many have been trapanned into Errour, is, because they either did not know, or not love

* ἐντρεφο-μενον.

the

the Truth. I can never say enough in the honour of *Truth*. *Truth* is *basis fidei*, the ground of our faith; it gives us an exact model of Religion; it shews us what we are to believe: * Take away *Truth*, and our Faith is Fancy. *Truth* is the *best flower in the Churches Crown*: We have not a richer Jewel to trust God with, than our Souls, nor he a richer Jewel to trust us with, than his *Truths*. *Truth* is *Insigne Honoris*, *an Ensign of Honour*; it distinguisheth us from the false Church, as Chastity distinguisheth a vertuous Woman from an Harlot. In short, *Truth* is *Ecclesiæ præsidium*, the Bulwark of a Nation: 2*Chron.* 11.17. it is said, the *Levites*, (who were the *antesignani*, the Ensign-Bearers of *Truth*) *strengthened the Kingdom*. *Truth* may bee compared to the Capitol of *Rome*, which was a place of the greatest strength: or the *Tower of David*, on which *there hang a thousand shields*, *Cant.* 4.4. Our Forts and Navies do not so much strengthen us as *Truth*. *Truth* is the best *Militia* of a Kingdom; if once we part with *Truth*, and espouse *Popery*, the *Lock is cut where our strength lies*. What then should we be violent for,

* *Veritas irradiat intellectum, animat & dirigit Bern.*

for, if not for Truth? We are bid ἀγωνίζεσθαι, to contend as in an Agony, *for the faith delivered to the Saints*, Jude 3. If Truth once be gone, we may write this Epitaph on *Englands* Tomb-stone, *The Glory is departed*.

2. 2. This holy violence is, when we are violent for our own salvation, 2 Pet. 1. 10. *Give all diligence to make your Calling and Election sure.* The Greek word σπουδάσατε signifies *anxious carefulness*; * or a serious heating ones thoughts about the business of Eternity; such a Care as sets Head and Heart a work: in this channel of Religion all a Christians zeal should run.

* Jansen. Beza. Gerhard.

3. 3. The third thing is, what is implied in this holy violence. It implies three things:

1. Resolution of Will.
2. Vigour of Affection.
3. Strength of Endeavour.

1. 1. *Resolution of the Will.* Psal. 119. 6. *I have sworn, and will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous Judgements.* Whatever is in the way to Heaven (though there be a Lion in the way) I will encounter it. Like a resolute Commander that chargeth through the whole Body of

of the Army. The Christian is resolved, come on it what will, he will have Heaven. Where there is this resolution, danger must be despised, difficulties trampled upon, terrours contemned *. This is the first thing in holy violence, resolution of will; I will have Heaven whatever it cost me; and this resolution must be in the strength of Christ.

* *Qui regni hæreditatis cupiditate, violentiâ quâdam irruperunt ut participes illius fiant cum desiderio vitæ.* Munster.

Resolution is like the biass to the bowl, which carries it strongly. Where there is but half a Resolution, a will to be saved, and a will to follow sin, it is impossible to be violent for Heaven. If a traveller be unresolved, sometimes he will ride this way, sometimes that; he is violent for neither.

2. *Vigor of the Affections.* The Will proceeds upon *Reason* *; the Judgement being informed of the excellency of a state of Glory, and the Will being resolved upon a Voyage to that Holy Land, now the Affections follow, and they are on fire in passionate longings after Heaven. The Affections are violent

2. * *Vbi fortis fuerit ratio, sequitur & fortis voluntas.*

lent things*, Psal. 42. 2. *My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God.* The Rabbins note here, that *David* saith not, *My soul hungereth*, but *thirsteth*; because naturally we are more impatient of thirst than hunger. See in what a rapid violent motion *Davids* affections were carried after God. The affections are like the wings of the Bird, which make the Soul swift in its flight after Glory. Where the affections are stirred up, there is offering violence to Heaven.

* Qui vim facit, vehementi studio properat. Ambr. in Luc. lib. 8.
* Kimchi, Aben-ezra.

3. 3. This violence implies *Strength of Endeavour*, when we strive for salvation as about a matter of life and death. 'Tis easie to talk of Heaven, but not to get to Heaven; we must *operam navare*, put forth all our strength; nay, call in the help of Heaven to this work.

4. 4. The fourth thing is, how many ways a Christian must offer violence; four ways.

He must offer violence
1. To Himself.
2. To the World.
3. To Satan.
4. To Heaven.

1. He

1. He must offer violence to *Himself*. This Self-Violence consists in two things:

1. Mortification of sin.
2. Provocation to duty.

1. Offering violence to ones self in a spiritual sense, consists in *mortification of sin: Self* is the *flesh*, this we must offer violence to. * *Hierom*, *Chrysostom*, *Theophilact*, do all expound taking Heaven by force, *the mortifying the flesh*: the flesh is a Bosom-Traitor, it is like the *Trojan* Horse within the Walls which doth all the mischief. The flesh is a sly Enemy; at first it is *dulce venenum*, afterwards *scorpio pungens*, it kills by embracing. The embraces of the flesh are like the Ivy embracing the Oak, which sucks out the strength of it for its own Leaves and Berries: So the flesh by its soft Embraces, sucks out all heart for Good, *Gal.* 5. 17. *The flesh lusteth against the spirit.* The pampering of the flesh, is the quenching of Gods Spirit. The flesh choaks and stifles holy motions: the flesh sides with Satan, and is true to his Interest. There's a party within that will not pray, that will not believe. The flesh inclines us more to

1.

* Regno vult inferri violentia, nisi cruenta ipsis vim inferamus. Brugens.

C believe

believe a temptation than a promiſe. There needs no wind to blow to ſin, when this tide within is ſo ſtrong to carry us thither. The fleſh being ſo near to us, its counſels are more attractive: no chain of Adamant binds ſo faſt as the chain of luſt. *Alexander*, who was *Victor mundi*, Conquerour of the world, was *captivus vitiorum*, led captive by vice. Now a man muſt offer violence to his fleſhly deſires, if he will be ſaved, *Col.* 3. 5. *Mortifie therefore your members which are upon the earth.* * The mortifying and killing ſin at the root, is when we not only forbear the *Acts of* ſin, but hate the *in-being*. *Plurimi peccata radunt non eradicant.* Bern.

* *Membra Terrena vocat Apoſtolus Affectus pravos, bi enim ſunt quaſi membra vitiis bominis.* Lap.

Felix mors quæ vitam non finit ſed ſtatum finit delictorum.

Nay, where ſin hath received its deadly wound, and is in part abated, yet the work of mortification is not to be laid aſide *. The Apoſtle perſwades the believing *Romans* to *mortifie the deeds of the fleſh*, *Rom.* 8. 13. In the beſt of Saints there is ſomething needs mortifying; much pride, envy, paſſion; therefore mortification

* *Carnis deſideria non uno ictu ſed ſenſim reſecanda ſunt.* Corn. Lap.

tification is called crucifixion, *Gal.* 5. 24. which is not done suddenly: every day some limb of the *body of death* must drop off *. Nothing harder than a Rock (saith *Cyril*) yet in the clefts thereof some weed or other will fasten its roots. None stronger than a Believer, yet do what he can, sin will fasten its roots in him, and spring out sometimes by inordinate desires. There is something needs mortifying. Hence it was St. *Paul* did ὑπωπιάζειν, *beat down his body*, by prayer, watching, fasting, 1 *Cor.* 9. 27.

* *In quantum non peperceris tibi, in tantum tibi Deus parcet.* Tertul.

Mortificatio à pugilibus sumpta. Chemnit.

But, is it not said, *Ephes.* 5. 29. *No man ever hated his own flesh?*

Quest.

As flesh is taken *Physically* for the bodily compages or constitution, so it is to be cherished; but as flesh is taken *Theologically* for the impure lustings of the flesh; so a man must hate his own flesh. The Apostle saith, Fleshly lusts *war against the Soul*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. If the flesh doth war against us, good reason we should war against the flesh.

Resp.

How may one do to offer violence to himself in mortifying the flesh?

Quest.

1. Withdraw the fuel that may make lust burn *. Avoid all temptations. Take

Answ.

* *Pugnæ sibi de vitiis, vincendi tui.* Ambros. lib. 1. de pœnit.

heed of that which doth nouriſh ſin. He that would ſuppreſs the Gout or Stone, avoids thoſe meats which are noxious. They who pray they may not be led into temptation, muſt not lead themſelves into temptation.

2. Fight againſt fleſhly luſts with ſpiritual Weapons; Faith and Prayer. The beſt way to combate with ſin, is, upon our knees. Run to the Promiſe, *Rom.*6.14. *Sin ſhall not have Dominion over you:* or, as the Greek word is, it ſhall not *Lord* it. Beg ſtrength of Chriſt, *Phil.*4.13. *Sampſon*'s ſtrength lay in his hair, ours lies in our Head Chriſt. This is one way of offering violence to ones ſelf by mortification. This is a myſtery to the major part of the world, who do rather gratifie the fleſh than mortifie it.

2. The ſecond thing wherein offering violence to a mans ſelf conſiſts, is, *in provocation to duty.* Then we offer holy violence to our ſelves, when we excite and provoke our ſelves to that which is good. This is called in Scripture, a *ſtirring up our ſelves to take hold of God,* Iſa.64.7. * Conſider,

* κρατησαι ἐχειν ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ.

* סחטר
Sui ſe ipſum exſuſcitet ſummo animi conatu. Forcius.

1. What

1. What absolute need there is to stir up our selves to holy Duties. 1.

In respect of the sluggishness of our hearts to that which is spiritual; blunt tools need whetting; a dull creature needs spurrs. Our hearts are dull and heavy in the things of God, therefore we had need spur them on, and provoke them to that which is good. The flesh hinders from duty: when we would pray, the flesh resists; when we should suffer, the flesh draws back. How hard is it sometimes to get leave of our hearts to seek God? Jesus Christ went more willingly to the Cross, than we do to the Throne of Grace. Had not we need then provoke our selves to duty? If our hearts are so unstrung in Religion, we had need prepare and put them in tune. 1.

The exercises of Gods Worship are contrary to nature; therefore there must be a provoking of our selves to them. The motion of the Soul to sin, is *natural*, but its motion towards Heaven is *violent*. The stone moves easily to the Centre; it hath an innate propenseness downward; but to draw up a Millstone into the Air, is done by 2.

violence, because it is against nature: so to lift up the heart to Heaven in duty, is done by violence, and we must provoke our selves to it.

2. 2. What it is to provoke our selves to duty.

1. 1. It is to awaken our selves, and shake off spiritual sloth. Holy *David* awakens his tongue and heart when he went about Gods service, *Psal.* 57. 9. *Awake up my glory, I my self will awaken early**. He found a somnolency and dulness in his soul, therefore did provoke himself to duty. *I my self will awake early*. Christians, though they be raised from the death of sin, yet often they fall asleep.

* *Et linguam allevatur, & citharam & cor. Musicul.*

2. 2. Provoking our selves to duty implies an uniting, and rallying together all the powers of our soul, and seting them on work in the exercises of Religion. A man saith to his thoughts, Be you fixed on God in this duty; and to his affections, Do you serve the Lord *without distraction*. Matters of Religion are done with intenseness of Spirit*.

* *Ex cast-ra.* Act. 26. 7.

3. 3. The third thing is to shew the several duties of Christianity, wherein

we

we must provoke and offer violence to our selves: I shall name seven.

1. We must provoke our selves to *reading of the Word.* What an infinite mercy is it that God hath honoured us with the Scriptures! The barbarous *Indians* have not the *Oracles of God* made known to them: they have the *Golden Mines*, but not the Scriptures, which are more to be desired than *much fine Gold*, *Psal.* 19. 10. Our Saviour bids us *search the Scriptures*, *Joh.* 5. 39. We must not read these holy lines carelessly *, as if they did not concern us, or run them over hastily; as *Israel* ate the Passeover *in haste*, but peruse them with reverence and seriousness. The noble *Bereans* did *search the Scriptures daily*, *Acts* 17. 11. The Scripture is the *Pandect* of divine Knowledge; it is the rule and touchstone of truth *; out of this Well we draw the water of life. To provoke to a diligent reading of the word, labour to have a right notion of Scripture. 1.

* Sacra Scriptura lectorem attentum, scitantem autem respuit. Rivet. Introduc. ad Script.

* κανὼν ἢ κανονικὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα. Iren.

Read the Word as a book made by God himself. It is θεόπνευστος, given *by divine inspiration*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. It is the Library of the Holy Ghost. The 1.

Prophets and Apostles were but θεοπνευστοι, Gods Amanuenses or Notaries to write the Law at his mouth. The Word is of Divine Original *, and reveals the *deep things of God to us.* That there is a Numen or Deity, is ingraven in mans heart, and is to be read in the Book of the Creatures.

* Differt Scriptura specificè à symbolis fidei quia illa est verbum Dei, illa autem per consensum ad illud quo ad regulam nostra veritatis revelata. Riv.

——Quæ sint verba Deum.——

But who this God is, and the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, is infinitely above the Light of Reason; only God himself could make this known. So for the Incarnation of Christ, God and man hypostatically united in one person; the mystery of imputed Righteousness; the doctrine of faith: what Angel in Heaven, who but God himself could reveal these things to us? How may this provoke to Diligence and Seriousness in reading the Word which is divinely inspired. Other Books may be made by holy men, but this Book is indited by the Holy Ghost.

2. Read the Word as a perfect Rule of Faith,

Faith; it contains all things essential to salvation *. *I adore the fulness of Scripture*, saith *Tertullian*. The Word teacheth us how to please God; how to order our conversation in the world; it instructs us in all things that belong either to Prudence or Piety. How should we read the Word with care and reverence, when it contains a perfect Model and Platform of Religion; and is able to *make us wise to salvation*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 17.

* *Adoro plenitudinem Scripturæ.* Tertul. Psa. 19. 7.

When you read the Word, look on it as a soul-enriching Treasury. Search here as for a *vein of Silver*, *Prov.* 2. 4. In this word are scattered many divine Aphorisms, gather them up as so many Jewels. This blessed Book helps to enrich you; it fills your head with knowledge, and your heart with grace: it stores you with Promises: a man may be rich in bonds. In this *field* the *Pearl of Price* is hid: What are all the worlds Riches to these? Islands of Spices, Coasts of Pearl, Rocks of Diamonds; These are but the Riches that Reprobates may have, but the Word gives us those Riches which Angels have. 3.

Read the Word as a Book of Evidences. 4.

dences. How carefully doth one read over his Evidences? Would you know whether God be your God? Search the Records of Scripture, 1 *Joh.* 3.24. *Hereby we Know he abides in us by his Spirit he hath given us.* Would you know whether you are *heirs of the Promise?* you must find it in these sacred Writings, 2 *Thes.* 2. 13. *He hath chosen us to salvation through sanctification.* They who are vessels of grace, shall be vessels of glory.

5. Look upon the Word as a spiritual Magazine, out of which you fetch all your weapons to fight against sin and Satan. 1. Here are weapons to fight against *sin.* The Word of God is a consecrated sword, that cuts asunder the lusts of the heart. When pride begins to lift up it self, the *Sword of the Spirit* destroies this sin, 1 *Pet.* 5. 5. *God resists the proud.* When passion vents it self, the Word of God, like *Hercules*-club, beats down this angry Fury, *Eccles.* 5.9. *Anger rests in the bosom of fools.* When Lust boils, the Word of God cools that intemperate heat, *Ephes.* 5. 5. *No unclean person hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ.* 2. Here are weapons to fight

fight against *Satan*. The Word feneeth off temptation. When the Devil tempted Christ, he three times wounded the old Serpent with the Sword of the Spirit. *'Tis written*, *Mat.* 4. 7. Satan never sooner foils a Christian, than when he is unarmed, and without Scripture-weapons.

Pulsus de Scripturis Diabolus fugitat, veris Scripturarum fragit clypeis. Brugens.

Look upon the Word as a spiritual Glass to dress your selves by: It is a Looking-glass for the blind, *Psa.* 19. 8. In other glasses you may see your faces; in this glass you may see your hearts, *Psal.* 119. 104. *Through thy Precepts I get understanding.* This Looking-glass of the Word clearly represents Christ: It sets him forth in his person, nature, offices, as most precious and eligible, *Cant.* 5. 16. He is *altogether lovely*; he is a wonder of beauty, a Paradise of delight. Christ who was vailed over in types, is clearly revealed in the Glass of the Scriptures. 6.

* *Splendor sit radius excitatus depulit.* Rivet.

Look upon the Word as a Book of spiritual Receipts. *Basil* compares the Word to an Apothecaries shop, which hath all kind of Medicines and Antidotes*. If you find your selves dead in duty, 7.

* *Omnis enim morbus in Scriptura habet medicinam.*

duty, here is a *Recipe*, *Psal.* 119. 50. *Thy Word hath quickned me.* If you find your hearts hard, the Word doth liquefie and melt them; therefore is compared to *fire* for its mollifying power, *Jer.* 23. 29. If you are poysoned with sin, here is an herb to expel it.

8. Look upon the Word as a soveraign Elixir to comfort you in distress; it comforts you against all your sins, temptations and afflictions. What are the Promises, but divine Cordials to revive fainting Souls. A gracious heart goes feeding on a Promise, as *Sampson* on the Hony-comb, *Judg.* 14. 9. The word comforts against sickness and death, 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. *O death where is thy sting?* A Christian dies embracing the Promise, as *Simeon* did Christ, *Heb.* 11. 16.

ἐ Καθ' ἡσυχίαν ἀναπνεῦσαι, ἀντιλαβόμενον τῆς ἐπαγγελίας. Ignatius.

9. Read the Word as the last Will and Testament of Christ. Here are many Legacies given to them that love him; Pardon of sin, Adoption, Consolation: this Will is in force, being sealed in Christs Blood. With what seriousness doth a Child read over the Will and Testament of his Father, that he may see what is left him?

Read

Read it as a Book by which you must be judged, *John* 12.48. *The Word I have spoken, shall judge him at the last day.* They who live according to the Rules of this Book, shall be acquitted; they who live contrary to them, shall be condemned. There are two Books God will go by, the Book of Conscience, and the Book of Scripture: the one shall be the Witness, and the other the Judge. How should every Christian then provoke himself to read this Book of God with Care and Devotion! This is that Book which God will proceed by at the last. They who fly from the Word as a Guide, shall be forced to submit to it as a Judge. 10.

2. The second Duty of Religion wherein we must provoke our selves, is, in *Hearing of the Word.* We may bring our bodies to the Word with ease, but not our hearts without offering violence to our selves. When we come to the Word Preached, we come about a business of the highest importance, therefore should stir up our selves, and hear with the greatest devotion. *Constantine* the Emperour was noted for his reverend attention to the Word. *Luk.* 19.48. 2.

All

All the people were attentive to hear him. In the Greek it is, *they hanged upon his lip**. When the Word is dispensed, we are now to lift up the everlasting doors of our hearts, that the King of glory may enter in.

* ἐξεκρέμαντο, *Pendebat ab ore ejus, tanquam extra se raptus pre aviditate.* Brug.

1. How far are they from offering violence to themselves in hearing, who scarce mind what is said, as if they were not at all concerned in the business: they come to Church more for *custom* than *conscience*, *Ezek.* 33. 31. *They come to thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and hear thy words, but they will not do them.* If we could tell them of a rich purchase, or of some place of preferment, they would diligently attend; but when the Word of Life is Preached, they disregard it.

2. 2. How far are they from offering violence to themselves in hearing, who come to the Word in a dull, drowsie manner, as if they came to Church to take a *Receipt* to make them sleep. The Word is to feed; it is strange to sleep at meat. The Word judgeth men; it is strange for a prisoner to fall asleep at the Bar. To such sleepy hearers God may

may say, *Sleep on.* He may suffer them to be so stupified, that no Ordinance shall awaken them, *Mat.* 13. 25. *While men slept, the enemy came and sowed Tares.* The Devil is never asleep, but sows the tares of sin in a drowsie hearer.

That we may, when we come to the Word, offer violence to our selves, and stir up our selves to hear with devotion, consider,

1. It is God that speaks to us. If a Judge give a charge upon the bench, all listen. If a King speaks, all give attention. When we come to the Word, we should think thus with our selves, *We are to hear God in this Preacher.* Therefore Christ is said, *Now* to speak to us from Heaven, *Heb.* 12. 25. Christ speaks in his Ministers, as a King speaketh in the person of his Embassadour. When *Samuel* knew it was the Lord that spake to him, he lent an ear, 2. *Sam.* 3. 5. *Speak Lord thy Servant heareth.* They who slight God speaking in his Word, shall hear him speaking in his wrath, *Psalm* 2. 5. *Then shall he speak to them in his wrath.*

2. Let us consider the weightiness of the

* χρὴ γὰρ ἡμᾶς ἐγρηγορέναι, ἐπεὶ καὶ τῶν ἀναγκαίων ἡ τῶν ἀναγκαιοτάτων φιλοσοφία, διὰ τοῦτο τῆς ῥᾳθυμίας ζημία. Chrysost.

the matters delivered to us *. As *Moses* said to *Israel*, Deut. 30. 19. *I call Heaven and Earth to Record this day, that I have set before you life and death.* We preach to men, of Christ, and the Eternal Recompences; here are the *magnalia Legis*, the *weighty matters of the Law*; and doth not all this call for serious attention? There is a great deal of difference between a Letter of news read to us, and a Letter of special business, wherein our whole Land and Estate is concerned. In the Word preached, our Salvation is concerned; here we are instructed to the Kingdom of God, and if ever we will be serious, it should be now, *Deut.* 32. 47. *It is not a vain thing for you, because it is your life.*

3. If the Word be not regarded, it will not be remembred *. Many complain they cannot remember, here is the reason, God punisheth their carelesness in hearing, with forgetfulness. He suffers Satan to take away the Word from them, *Mat.* 13. 4. *The Fowls of the Air came and devoured*

* *Mutem formidate aliquam, & verba vitæ, i. e. alimenta justitiæ, in memoriæ arca non tenetis.* Greg.

the

the seed. The Devil is no Recusant: he comes to Church, but it is not for any good intent; he gets away the Word from men. How many have been robbed of the Sermon and their souls both at once?

4. It may be the last time that ever God will speak to us in his Word; it may be the last Sermon that ever we shall hear; and we may go from the place of hearing, to the place of judging. Did people think thus when they come into the House of God, Perhaps this will be the last time that God will counsel us about our souls; the last time that ever we shall see our Minister's face, with what devotion would they come! how would their affections be all on fire in hearing! We give great attention to the last speeches of friends. A Parents dying words are received as Oracles. Oh let all this provoke us to diligence in hearing: let us think, this may be the last time that *Aarons Bell* shall sound in our ears; and before another day, we shall be in another World.

3. The third Duty wherein we are to offer violence to our selves, is in Prayer. 3. *Duty.*

Prayer is a duty which keeps the trade of Religion going. When we either joyn in prayer with others, or pray alone, we must use holy violence; not eloquence in prayer but violence carries it*. *Theodorus* speaking of *Luther*, Once (saith he) I over-heard him in prayer; but, (good God) with what life and spirit did he pray! It was with so much Reverence as if he were speaking to God, yet with so much confidence as if he had been speaking to his friend. There must be a stirring up of the heart

1. To Prayer.
2. In Prayer.

1. A stirring up of the heart *to* Prayer, *Job* 11. 13. *If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him.* This *preparing* our heart is by holy thoughts and ejaculations. The Musitian first tunes his Instrument before he playes.

2. There must be a stirring up of the heart *in* Prayer. Prayer is a lifting up of the mind and soul to God*, which cannot be done aright without offering violence to ones self. The name given to prayer import violence. It is called wrestling.

* Sit ratio pura, servitus brevis. Prosper.

* Elevatio mentis ad Deum.

wrestling *, *Gen.* 32. 24. and *pouring out the soul*, 1 *Sam.* 1. 15. both which imply vehemency. The affection is required as well as the invention. The Apostle speaks of an *effectual fervent* prayer, which is a parallel phrase to *offering violence*.

* מאבק

Alas, how far are they from offering violence to themselves in prayer, 1. That give God a *dead heartless* prayer *? God would not have the *blind* offered, *Mal.* 1. 8. As good offer the *blind* as the *dead*. Some are half asleep when they pray; and wilt a sleepy prayer ever awaken God * ? Such as mind not their own prayers, how do they think that God should mind them? Those prayers God likes best which come seething hot from the heart.

* Thus Illustrious Prasil. Luth.

* Psal. 44. 23.

2. How far are they from offering violence, that give God *distracted* prayer? while they are praying, they are thinking of their shop and trade *. How can he shoot right whose eye is quite off the mark? *Ezek.* 33. 31. *Their heart goes after their covetousness.* Many are casting up their accounts in prayer, as *Hierom* once complained of himself. How can God be pleased with this?

* Pr. ait. mens vna alia loco de re ali- qua cogi- tat. Hie o- de or at.

Will a King endure that while his subject is delivering a petition, and speaking to him, he should be playing with a feather? When we send our hearts on an errand to Heaven, how often do they loiter and play by the way? This is matter of blushing. That we may offer violence to our selves, and by fervency feather the wing of prayer: let these things be duly weighed.

1. The Majesty of God with whom we have to do. He sees how it is with us in prayer, whether we are deeply affected with those things we pray for. *The King came in to see the guests*, Mat. 22. 11. So when we go to pray, the King of glory comes in to see in what frame we are: he hath a window which looks into our breasts, and if he sees a dead heart, he may turn a deaf ear. Nothing will sooner make Gods anger wax hot than a cold prayer.

2. Prayer without fervency and violence, is no prayer; it is *speaking*, not *praying*. Lifeless prayer is no more prayer, than the picture of a man is a man. To say a prayer, is not to pray; *Æschanius* taught his Parrot the Lords Prayer. St. *Ambrose* saith well, *it is*

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the life and affection in the duty that baptizeth it; and gives it its name. 'Tis the violence and wrestling of the affections that makes it a prayer; else it is no prayer. But a man may say as *Pharaoh*, *I have dreamed a dream, Gen.* 41. 15.

Affectus operi nomen imponit. Ambros.

3. The zeal and violence of the affections in prayer best suits with Gods nature. He is a *Spirit, John* 4. 24. and sure that prayer which is full of life and spirit, is the *savoury meat he loves*; 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Spiritual Sacrifices acceptable to God* *. Spirituality and fervency in duty, is like the spirits of wine, which are the more refined part of the wine.

* *Cum flamma effluere cæperit oratio, in odoriferos expirans fumos; nescit desinere visto ad Deum ire: oratio quæ ignescere non potuit; si frigida, sabito relabitur.* Bern. super Cant.

Bodily exercise profits nothing. 'Tis not the stretching of the lungs, but the vehemency of the desire makes musick in Gods ear *.

* Ephes. 5. 19.

4. Consider the need we have of those things which we ask in prayer. We come to ask the favour of God; and if we have not his love, all that we enjoy is cursed to us. We pray that our souls may be washed in Christs blood; and if he wash us not, *we have no part in him* *. These are such mer-

* Joh. 13. 8.

cies, that if God deny us, we are for ever undone. Therefore what violence had we need put forth in prayer? When will a man be earnest, if not when he is begging for his life?

5. Let it provoke violence in prayer to consider, those things which we ask, God hath a mind to grant. If a Son ask nothing but what his Father is willing to bestow, he may be the more earnest in his suit. We go to God for pardon of sin, and no work more pleasing to him than to seal pardons. Mercy is *his delight, Micah* 7. 18. We pray to God for an holy heart, and this prayer is according to his will, 1 *Thes.* 4. 3. *This is the will of God, your sanctification.* We pray that God would give us an heart to love him. How pleasing must this request needs be to God! This, if any thing, may excite prayer, and carry it in a *fiery Chariot* up to Heaven, when we know we pray for nothing but what God is more willing to grant than we are to ask.

6. No mercy can be bestowed on us but in a way of prayer. Mercy is purchased by Christs blood, but it is conveyed by prayer. All the promises are

bonds

bonds made over to us, but prayer puts these bonds in suit. The Lord had told *Israel* with what rich mercy he would bespangle them; he would bring them to their native Country, and bring them thither with *new hearts*, *Ezek.* 36. Yet this Tree of the Promise would not drop its fruit, till shaken with the hand of prayer, *verse* 37. *For all this will I yet be enquired.* The brest of Gods mercy is full, but prayer must draw the brest. Surely, if all other waies are blockt up, there's no good to be done without prayer; How should we ply this oar, and by an holy violence stir up our selves to take hold of God?

7. 'Tis only violence and intensuess of spirit in prayer hath the promise of mercy affixed to it, *Mat.* 7. 7. *Knock and it shall be opened.* Knocking is a violent motion. The *Ædiles* among the *Romans* had their doors alwaies standing open, that all who had petitions might have free access to them. God's heart is ever open to fervent prayer. Let us then be fired with zeal, and with Christ pray *yet more earnestly*. 'Tis violence in prayer makes Heaven-gates fly

intenditur opus violentia.

open, and fetche thin whatever mercies we ſtand in need of.

8. The large returns God hath given to violent prayer *. This Dove ſent to Heaven, hath often brought an Olive-leave in its mouth, *Pſal.* 34. 6. *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him.* Crying prayer prevails *. *Daniel* in the *Den* prayed and prevailed. Prayer did ſhut the Lions mouth, and open the Lions Den *. Fervent prayer (ſaith one) hath a kind of Omnipotency in it. *Sozomen* ſaith of *Apollonius*, that he never aſked any thing of God in all his life that he obtained not. *Sleidan* reports of *Luther*, that perceiving the intereſt of Religion to be low, he betook himſelf to prayer; at length riſing off his knees, he came out of his Cloſet triumphantly, ſaying to his friends, *Vicimus, Vicimus, We have overcome, We have overcome.* At which time it was obſerved, there came out a Proclamation from Charles the Fifth, that none ſhould be further moleſted for the

* Nemo ad Deum venit, & ſine non quod petit accepit.

* Oratio pura cælos penetrans vacua non redibit. Aug. in Serm.

* Cælos tundimus, Deum fatigamus, miſericordiam extorquemus. Tertull. Apol.

Joh. Sleid. Comment.

Profession of the Gospel. How may this encourage us, and make us hoise up the sails of prayer, when others of the Saints have had such good returns from the holy Land.

That we may put forth this holy violence in prayer, it is requisite there'd be a renewed principle of grace. If the person be graceless, no wonder the prayer is heartless. The body while it is dead hath no heat in it: while a man is dead in sin, he can have no heat in duty.

2. That we may be the more violent in prayer, it is good to pray with a sense of our wants. A begger that is pinched with want, will be earnest in craving an alms. Christian, review thy wants; thou wanteſt an humble spiritual frame of heart; thou wanteſt the light of Gods countenance; the sense of want will quicken prayer. That man can never pray fervently, that doth not pray feelingly. How earnest was *Sampson* for water, when he was ready to die, *Judg.* 15. 18. *I die for thirst.*

3. If we would be violent in prayer, let us beg a violent wind. The Spirit of God is resembled to a *mighty rushing wind;*

* Δεῖ γὰρ χρόνον τῇ πνεύματος ἐδόντας ὡς ἡμᾶς ἐκπεσόντας ἡμᾶς, &c. Chryſ. de prec.

wind *, Acts 2. 2. Then we are violent, when this bleſſed Wind fills our ſails, *Jude* v. 20. *Praying in the Holy Ghoſt*. If any fire be in our Sacrifice, it comes down from Heaven.

4. *Duty.* The fourth Duty wherein we muſt offer violence to our ſelves, is *Meditation*; a duty wherein the very heart and life-blood of Religion lies. St. *Bernard* calls Meditation *animæ viaticum*, a bait by the way *. And another ſaith, μελέτη τὸ σῶν *. Meditation may be thus deſcribed; It is an holy exerciſe of the mind, whereby we bring the truths of God to remembrance, and do ſeriouſly ponder upon them, and apply them to our ſelves. In meditation there are two things.

* Bern in Cant.

* Periand.

1. A Chriſtians retiring of himſelf, a locking himſelf up from the world. Meditation is a work which cannot be done in a croud.

2. It is a ſerious thinking on God. It is not a few tranſient thoughts that are quickly gone, but a fixing and ſtaying the mind upon heavenly objects. This cannot be done without exerting all the powers of our ſouls, and offering violence to our ſelves. We

We are the more to provoke our ſelves to this duty, becauſe

1. Meditation is ſo croſs to fleſh and blood. Naturally we ſhun holy meditation. To meditate on worldly ſecular things, if it were all day, we can do it without any diverſion *: But to have our thoughts fixed on God, how hard do we find it? how do our hearts quarrel with this duty? what pleas and excuſes have we to ſhift it off? The natural averſeneſs from this duty ſhews, we are to offer violence to our ſelves in it.

* *Actis mentis ad levisſima quæque ramditur & reflit.* Mornæus.

2. Satan doth what he can to hinder this duty. He is an enemy to meditation. The Devil cares not how much we hear, nor how little we meditate. Hearing begets knowledge, but meditation begets devotion. Meditation doth ballaſt the heart, and make it ſerious; and Satan labours to keep the heart from being ſerious. What need therefore is there of offering violence to our ſelves in this duty? But me-thinks I hear ſome ſay, when they ſit alone they know not what to meditate of; I ſhall therefore furniſh them with matter of meditation.

1. Meditate

1. 1. Meditate seriously upon the corruption of your nature. We have lost that pure quintessential frame of soul that once we had. There is a Sea of sin in us. Our nature is a source and seminary of all evil *: like Peter's sheet, wherein were wild beasts and creeping things, Acts 10. 12. This sin cleaves to us as a leprosie. This original pollution makes us guilty before the Lord: and though we should never commit actual sin, this merits Hell. The meditation of this would be a means to pull down our pride. Nay, even those that have grace have cause to walk humbly, because they have more corruption in them than grace; their dark side is broader than their light.

* O quam multæ feræ in hominis corde, tanquam in densissima silva, latitant & delitescunt! Mornæus.

2. 2. Meditate seriously upon the death and passion of Christ *. His soul was overcast with a cloud of sorrow when he was conflicting with his Fathers wrath; and all this we should have suffered. *Isa.* 53. 5. *He was wounded for our transgressions.* As David said, *Lo I have sinned, but these sheep, what have they done?* 2 *Sam.* 24. 17.

* Foderunt latus Christi, — & per has rimas hoc mihi fugere nidi de petra, Bern. in Cant.

So

So we have sinned, but this Lamb of God, what had he done?

The serious meditation of this would produce Repentance. How could we look upon him *whom we have pierced*, and not mourn over him? When we consider how dear our sins cost Christ; how should we shed the blood of our sins which shed Christ's blood?

2. The meditation of Christ's death would fire our hearts with love to Christ. What friend shall we love, if not him who died for us? His love to us made him cruel to himself. As *Rebecca* said to *Jacob*, *Gen.* 27. 13. *Upon me, upon me be the curse!* So said Christ, *Upon me be the curse*, that poor sinners may inherit the blessing.

3. Meditate on your Evidences for Heaven. What have you to shew for Heaven, if you should die this night? 1. Was your heart ever thoroughly convinced of sin? Did you ever see your self lost without Christ? Conviction is the first step to conversion, *Joh.* 8. 9. 2. Hath God ever made you willing to take Christ upon his own terms? *Zech.* 6. 13. *He shall be a Priest upon his Throne.* Are you as willing that Christ should

3.

be

be upon the Throne of your heart to rule, as a Priest at the Altar to intercede. Are you willing to renounce those sins to which the bias of your heart doth naturally incline? Can you set those sins as *Uriah* in the forefront of the battel to be slain? Are you willing to take Christ *for better for worse*; to take him with his Cross, and to avouch Christ in the worst of times.

3. Have you the indwelling-presence of the Spirit? If you have, what hath Gods Spirit done in you? Hath it made you *of another spirit?* meek, mercifull, humble? Is it a transforming Spirit? Hath it left the impress of its own holiness upon you? These are good evidences for Heaven. By these, as by a spiritual touch-stone, you may know whether you have grace or no. Beware of false Evidences. None are further from having the *true Pearl*, than they that content themselves with the counterfeit.

4. Meditate upon the uncertainty of all sublunary comforts. Creature-delights have their flux, and reflux. How oft doth the Sun of worldly pomp and grandure go down at noon. *Xerxes* was

force

forced to fly away in a small vessel, who but a little before wanted Sea-room for his Navy. We say every thing is mutable; but who meditates upon it? The world is resembled to a *Sea of glass mingled with fire*, *Rev.* 15. 2. Glass is slippery, it hath no sure footing: and Glass mingled with fire is subject to consume. All creatures are fluid and uncertain, and cannot be made to fix. What is become of the glory of *Athens*, the pomp of *Troy*? 1 *John* 2. 17. *The world passeth* * *away*: It slides away as a Ship in full sail. How quickly doth the Scene alter? and a low ebb succeed an high tide? There's no trusting to any thing. Health may be turned to sickness; friends may die; riches may take wings. We are ever upon the Tropicks. The serious meditation of this, would 1. Keep us from being so deceived by the world. We are ready to set up our rest here, *Psal.* 49. 11. *Their inward thought is that their houses shall continue for ever.* We are apt to think that our *Mountain stands strong*. We dream of an earthly eternity. Alas, did we meditate how casual and uncertain these things are, we should not be so often deluded. Have

* ἐπιτερ-χεται, ἐλεύ-σεται.

not

not we seen great disappointments; and where we have thought to suck honey, there we have drunk wormwood?

2. The meditation of the uncertainty of all things under the Sun, would much moderate our affections to them. Why should we so eagerly pursue an uncertainty? Many take care to get a great estate; it is uncertain whether they shall keep it. The fire may break in where the thief cannot: or if they do keep it, it is a question whether they shall have the comfort of it. They lay up for a child; that child may die; or, if he live, he may prove a burden. This seriously meditated on, would cure the dropsie of covetousness; and make us sit loose to that which hangs so loose, and is ready to drop off from us.

3. The meditation of this uncertainty would make us look after a certainty; that is, the getting of grace. This holy *anointing abides*, 1 *John* 2. 27. Grace is a flower of Eternity. *Non fert ad umbras incipta virtus.* Death doth not destroy grace, but transplant it, and make it grow in a better soil. He that hath true holiness, can

no

no more lose it, than the Angels can which are fixed Stars in Glory.

5. Meditate of Gods severity against sin. Every Arrow in Gods Quiver is shot against it *: Sin burned *Sodom*, drowned the old world. Sin kindles Hell. If when a spark of God's wrath flies into a mans Conscience, it is so terrible, what is it then when God *stirs up all his wrath? Psal.*78.39. The meditation of this would fright us out of our sins. There cannot be so much sweetness in sin, as there is sting. How dreadful is God's anger! *Psal.*90.11. *Who knoweth the power of his wrath?* All fire compared with the fire of God's wrath is painted & imaginary. O that every time we meddle with sin, we would think with our selves we choose the *Bramble*, and fire will come out of this Bramble to devour us.

* Τὰς ἀμφιβλήστρους αὐτοῦ. Chrysost.

6. Meditate on eternal life, 1 *John* 2.25. *This is his promise, even eternal life.* Life is sweet, and this word *eternal* makes it sweeter. This, lies in the immediate vision and fruition of God. 1. This is a spiritual life: it is opposite to that animal life which we live now. Here we hunger and thirst; but there 6.

we shall *hunger no more*, Rev. 7. 16. There is the marriage-supper of the Lamb, which will not only satisfie hunger, but prevent it. That blessed life to come doth not consist in sensual delights, meat, and drink, and musick; nor in the comfort of Relations: but the Soul will be wholly swallowed up in God, and acquiesce in him with infinite complacency. As when the Sun appears, the Stars vanish: So when God shall appear in his glory, and fill the soul, then all earthly sensitive delights shall vanish. 2. It is a *glorious* life. The bodies of the Saints shall be enamell'd with Glory: they shall be made like Christs glorious body, *Phil.* 3. 21. And if the Cabinet be of such curious needle-work, how rich shall the Jewel be that is put into it! how bespangled with glory shall the soul be! Every Saint shall wear his white Robe, and have his Throne to sit upon. Then God will put some of his own glory upon the Saints. Glory shall not only be revealed *to* them, but *in* them*, *Rom.* 8. 18. And this life of glory shall be crowned with Eternity; what Angel can express it! O let us often meditate on this.

* *Non tantum aderit gloria, sed inerit.* Bern.

1. The

1. The meditation of eternal life would make us labour for a spiritual life. The Child must be born before it is crowned. We must be *born of the Spirit*, before we are crowned with glory.

2. The meditation of Eternal Life would comfort us in regard of the shortness of natural life. Our life we live now, flies away as a shadow. It is called a *flower*, Psal. 103. 15. a *vapour*, Jam. 4. 14. *Job* sets forth fragil life very elegantly in three of the Elements, *Land*, *Water*, *Air*, Job 9. 25, 26. Go to the Land, and there man's life is like a *swift Post*. Go to the Water, there man's life is like a *ship under sail*. Look to the Air, and there man's life is like a *Flying Eagle*. We are hasting to the grave. When our years do encrease, our life doth decrease*. Death creeps upon us by degrees. When our sight grows dim, there death creeps in at the Eye. When our hearing is bad, there death creeps in at the Ear. When our Legs tremble under us, there is death pulling down the main pillars of the House; but *eternal life* comforts us against the shortness of natural life. That life to come is subject

* *Cum vivere cesset, vita decrescit.* Seneca.

to no infirmities; it knows no period. We shall be *as the Angels of God*, capable of no mutation or change. Thus you have seen six noble subjects for your thoughts to exspatiate upon.

But where is the meditating Christian? Here I might lament the want of holy meditation. Most people live in a hurry; they are so distracted with the cares of the world, that they can find no time to meditate; or scarce ask their Souls how they do. We are not like the Saints in former Ages. *David* did meditate in Gods Precepts, *Psal.*119.15. *Isaac walked in the evening to meditate*, *Gen.*24.63. He did take a turn with God. What devout meditations do we read in St. *Austin* and *Anselm*? But it is too much out of date among our modern Christians.

——*Terras Astræa reliquit.*——

Those Beasts under the Law which did not chew the cud were unclean. Such as do not chew the cud by holy meditation, are to be reckoned among the unclean. But I shall rather turn my *lamentation* into a *perswasion*, entreating Christians

stians to offer violence to themselves in this so necessary Duty of Meditation. *Pythagoras* sequestred himself from all society, and lived in a Cave for a whole year, that he might meditate upon Philosophy. How then should we retire and lock up our selves at least once a day that we may meditate upon Glory!

1. Meditation makes the Word preached to profit: it works it upon the Conscience. As the Bee sucks the flower; so by meditation we suck out the sweetness of a Truth. It is not the receiving of meat into the mouth; but the digesting of it makes it nutritive. So it is not the receiving the most excellent truths in at the ear, that nourisheth our souls, but the digesting them by Meditation. Wine poured into a sieve runs out. Many truths are lost, because Ministers pour this Wine into sieves, either into leaking Memories, or feathery minds. Meditation is like a soaking rain, that goes to the root of a Tree, and makes it bring forth fruit.

2. Holy meditation quickens the affections, *Psal.* 119. 97. *O how I love thy Law! It is my meditation all the day.* The reason our affections are so cold to

heavenly things, is, because we do not warm them at the fire of holy meditation. As the musing on amorous objects makes the fire of lust burn; the musing on injuries makes the fire of revenge burn: so meditating on the transcendent beauties of Christ, would make our love to Christ flame forth.

3. Meditation hath a transforming power in it. The hearing of the Word may affect us; but the meditating of it doth transform us. Meditation stamps the impression of Divine Truths upon our hearts. By meditating of God's holiness, we grow holy. As *Jacob's* Cattel by looking on the Rods, *conceived like the Rods*: so while by meditation we look upon God's purity, we are changed into his likeness, and are made partakers of his Divine Nature.

4. Meditation produceth Reformation, *Psal.* 119.59. *I thought on my wayes, and turned my feet unto thy Testimonies.* Did but people meditate on the damnableness of sin; did they but think when they meddle with it, there is a Rope at the end of it, which will hang them eternally in Hell; they would break off a course of sinning, and be-

come new Creatures. Let all this perswade to holy meditation. I dare be bold to say, if men would spend but one quarter of an hour every day in contemplating heavenly objects, it would leave a mighty impression upon them, and through the blessing of God might prove the beginning of an happy conversion.

But how shall we do to meditate? Quest.

Get a love to spiritual things. We usually meditate on those things which we love. The voluptuous man can muse on his pleasures, the covetous man on his bags of gold. Did we love heavenly things, we should meditate more on them. Many say, they cannot meditate, because they want memory; but is it not rather because they want affection? Did they love the things of God, they would make them their continual study and meditation. Answ.

5. The fifth Duty wherein we are to offer violence to our selves, is, *Self-examination*; a duty of great importance. It is a parlying with ones own heart, *Psalm.* 77. 7. *I commune with my own heart. David* did put interrogatories to himself. Self-examination is the setting 5 Duty.

up a Court in Conscience, and keeping a Register there, that by a strict scrutiny a man may know how things stand between God and his own Soul. Self-examination is a *spiritual Inquisition*; a bringing ones self to trial. A good Christian doth as it were begin the day of Judgement here in his own Soul. Self-searching is an Heart-Anatomy. As a Chirurgion, when he makes a Dissection in the Body, discovers the *intestina*, the inward parts, the Heart, Liver, Arteries: so, a Christian anatomizeth himself; he searcheth what is flesh, and what is spirit; what is sin, and what grace, *Psal.* 77.7. *My spirit made diligent search*: As the Woman in the Gospel did light a Candle, and search for her lost Groat, *Luke* 15.8. So Conscience is the *Candle of the Lord*, *Prov.* 20.27. A Christian by the Light of this Candle must search his Soul if he can find any grace there. The Rule by which a Christian must try himself, is the Word of God, Phancy and Opinion are false Rules to go by. We must judge of our spiritual condition by the Canon of Scripture. This *David* calls a *Lamp unto his feet*, *Psalm* 119. 105. Let the Word be the

Umpire

Umpire to decide the controversie whether we have grace or no. We judge of colours by the Sun: so we must judge of the estate of our souls by the light of Scripture.

Self-examination is a great Duty incumbent*; it requires self-excitation: it cannot possibly be done without offering violence to our selves.

* Lam. 3. 40. *Perscrutemur vias.* Junius.

1. Because the duty in it self is difficult: 1. It is *actus reflexivus*, a work of self-reflection; it lies most with the heart. 'Tis hard to look inward. External acts of Religion are facil; to lift up the eye to Heaven, to bow the Knee, to read a prayer; this requires no more labour than for a Papist to tell over his beads; but to examine a mans self, to turn in upon his own Soul, to take the Heart as a Watch all in pieces, and see what is defective, this is not easie. *Reflexive acts are hardest.* The eye can see every thing but it self. It is easie to spy the faults of others, but hard to find out our own. 2. Examination of a mans self is difficult, because of self-love. As ignorance blinds; so self-love flatters. Every man is ready to think the best of himself. What *Solomon* saith of love to

to our neighbour, is most true of self-love, it hides a multitude of evil, *Prov.* 10. 12. A man looking upon himself in *Philautia speculo*, in the glass of self-love, his vertues appear greater than they are, and his sins lesser. Self-love makes one rather excuse what is amiss, than examine it.

* *Malunt vitium excusare quàm excutere.* Seneca.

2. As examination it in it self difficult; so it is a work which we are very hardly brought to. That which causeth a backwardness to self-examination, is, 1. *Consciousness of guilt.* Sin clamours inwardly, and men are loth to look into their hearts, lest they should find that which should trouble them. It is little pleasure to read the *Hand-writing* on the wall of conscience. Many Christians are like trades-men that are sinking in their Estates; they are loth to look over their Books, or cast up their accounts, lest they should find their Estates low. So they are loth to look into their guilty hearts, lest they should find something there, which should affright them: as *Moses* was affrighted at the sight of the *Rod* turned into a Serpent.

2. Men are hardly brought to this

duty,

duty, because of foolish presumptuous hopes: they fancy their estate to be good, and while they weigh themselves in the Ballance of presumption, they pass for current. Many take their salvation on trust. The foolish Virgins thought they had had Oyl in their lamps as well as the wise, *Mat.* 25. Some are not *sure* of their salvation, but *secure*. If one were to buy a piece of land, he would not take it upon trust, but examine the title. How confident are some of salvation, yet never examine their title to Heaven?

3. Men are not forward to examine themselves; because they rest in the good opinion of others: how vain is this! Alas, one may be Gold and Pearl in the eye of others; yet God may judge him *Reprobate Silver*: others may think him a Saint; and God may write him down in his black book. *Judas* was looked upon by the rest of the Apostles, as a true Believer; they would have been ready to have given their hands to his certificate; yet he was a Traitor. Standers by can but see the outward carriage; they cannot tell what evil is in the heart. Fair streams may run on the top

top of a River, but vermin may lie at the bottom.

4. Men are hardly brought to examine themselves, because they do not believe Scripture. The Scripture saith, The *heart is deceitful* above all things, *Jer.* 17. 9. *Solomon* said, there were four things too wonderful for him that he could not know, *Prov.* 30. 19. He might have added a fifth; *The Way of mans heart.* The heart is the greatest Impostor; it will be ready to put one off with seeming Grace, instead of saving. The heart will perswade that a slight tear is Repentance; a lazy desire is Faith. Now because the generality of people do not believe that there is such fallacy in their hearts, therefore they are so slow to examine them. This natural backwardness in us to self-reflection, should cause us to offer the more violence to our selves in making a thorow disquisition and search of our hearts.

Oh that I might prevail with Christians, to take pains with themselves in this great work of Examination. Their salvation depends on it. It is the note of an Harlot; she is seldom at home, *Prov.* 7. 11, 12. *Her feet abide not*

not in her house; now is she without, now in the streets. It is a sign of an Harlot-Professor, to be altogether abroad, spying the faults of others; but is never at home with his own heart. Oh let us try our Hearts, as we do Gold by the *Touch-stone.* Let us examine our sins, and finding out this *leven,* burn it. Let us examine our Grace, whether it be of the *right kind.* One went into the field to gather herbs, and he gathered *wild gourds,* and then *Death was in the Pot,* 2 *Kings* 4. 40. So many think they have Grace, the *right Herb*; but it proves a *wild gourd,* and brings death and damnation. That we may offer violence to our selves in this great business of *Examination,* let these few things be seriously weighed.

1. Without self-examination we can never know how it is with us. If we should die presently, we cannot tell to what Coast we should sail; whether to Hell or Heaven. It is reported of *Socrates,* when he was going out of the World, he had this speech, *I am now to dye, and the gods know whether I shall be happy or miserable.* That man who is ignorant of the state of his Soul, must needs

needs have *the trembling of the heart*, as *Cain* had a shaking in his flesh. By a serious scrutiny of our hearts, we come to know to what Prince we belong, whether to *the Prince of peace*, or *the Prince of the air*. If we will not try our selves, God will try us. He will examine us as the chief Captain did *Paul*, *by scourging*, &c. He will ask that question to Christ, *Whose image and superscription is this?* And if we cannot shew him his own image, he will reject us.

3. There is secret corruption within, which will never be found out but by searching *. There are in the heart (as *Austin* saith) *hidden pollutions*. When *Pharaoh*'s Steward accused *Joseph*'s Brethren of having the Cup; they durst have sworn, they had not the Cup in their sack. Little doth a man know what Atheism, Pride, Uncleanness is in his heart, till he searcheth.

* *Non videmus plerumque corda nostra, nisi secreta bibat scrutinii pulla.* Lap. Plangendis tenebræ.

4. The great advantage which will accrew to us: the benefit is great which way soever things turn. If upon examination we find that we have no grace

in

in truth, then the mistake is discovered, and the danger prevented. If we find that we have grace, we may take the comfort of it. How glad was he that had *found the Pearl of great price?* He that upon search finds that he hath but the *minimum quod sic*, the least degree of grace, is like one that hath found his *Box of Evidences*; he is Heir to all the Promises, and in a state of Salvation.

And that we may go on the more successively in this work, let us desire God to help us to find out our hearts, *Job* 34. 32. *That which I see not, teach thou me.* Lord, take off the vail; shew me my heart; let me not perish through mistake, or go to Hell with hope of Heaven. *

* *Plurimi, spe pericliantur.* Aug.

The sixth duty wherein we must offer violence to our selves, is, *The Religious sanctifying of the Lords day.* That there should be a day of holy rest dedicated to God, appears from the institution. *Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.* Our Christian Sabbath comes in the room of the Jewish Sabbath: it is called κυριακὴ ἡμέρα, *the Lords day*, Rev. 1. 10. from Christ the Author of it. Our Sabbath is altered by Christ's own appoint-

6 Duty.

appointment. He arose this day out of the grave, and appeared on it often to his Disciples, 1 Cor. 16. 2. To intimate to them (saith *Athanasius*) that he transferred the Sabbath to the Lords day. And St. *Austin* saith, That by Christ's rising on the first day of the week, it was consecrated to be the Christian Sabbath in remembrance of his Resurrection *. This day was anciently called *Dies Lucis*, the day of Light; as *Junius* observes. The other days of the week would be dark, were it not for the shining of the *Sun of Righteousness* on this day. This day hath been called by the Antients, *Regina dierum*, the Queen of days. And St. *Hierom* preferrs this day above all solemn Festivals. The Primitive Church had this day in high veneration: it was a great badge of their Religion: for when the question was asked, *Servasti Dominicum?* Keepest thou the Sabbath? the answer was made, *Christianus sum*, I am a Christian, and dare not omit the celebration of the Lords day. What great cause have we thankfully to remember this day! As the benefit of *Israel's* deliverance

* Dominicus dies, Christi Resurrectione declaratus est Christianis, & ex illo capit habere festivitatem suam.

rance from the *Babylonish* captivity was so great, that it drowned the remembrance of their deliverance from *Egypt*, *Jer.* 16. 14. So the benefit of our deliverance from Satan's captivity, and the rising of Christ from finishing the glorious work of our Redemption was so famous, that in respect of this, his other benefits receive as it were a diminution. Great was the work of Creation; but greater the work of Redemption. It cost more to redeem us, than make us. In the one, there was only the speaking a word, *Psal.* 148. 5 in the other the shedding of blood, *Heb.* 9. 22. The Creation was the work of God's *fingers*, *Psal.* 8. 3. the Redemption, the work of his *arm*, *Luke* 1. 5. In the Creation God gave us *our selves*; in the Redemption he gave us *himself*. So that the Sabbath putting us in mind of our Redemption, ought to be observed with the highest devotion, Herein we must offer holy violence to our selves.

When this blessed day approacheth, we should labour, that as the day is sanctified; so our hearts may be sanctified.

We must on this day *rest from all the*

works of our calling. As *Abraham* when he went to Sacrifice, left his Servant and Ass at the bottom of the hill, *Gen.* 22.5. So when we are to worship God this day, we must leave all secular business behind. And as *Joseph* when he would speak with his Brethren, thrust out the *Egyptians:* so, when we would have converse with God this day, we must thrust out all earthly employments. Though works of *necessity* may be done, and works of *charity*, (for God will have mercy, and not sacrifice); yet in other cases we must cease from all worldly negotiations. It is observable concerning *Mary Magdalen*, that she refused to anoint Christ's dead body on the Sabbath day, *Luke* 23. 56. She had before prepared her ointment, but came not to the Sepulchre till the Sabbath was past. She rested that day from *civil work*, though it were a commendable and glorious work (the anointing of Christ's dead body).

2. When this blessed day approacheth, we must lift up our hearts in thankfulness to God, that he hath put another *price into our hands* for the gaining of heavenly wisdom. These are our spiritual

ritual harveſt-daies; now the wind of God's Spirit blows upon the ſails of our affections, and we may be much furthered on in our heavenly voyage. Chriſtian, lift up thy heart to God in thankfulneſs, that he hath given thee another golden ſeaſon, and be ſure thou improve it; it may be thy laſt. Seaſons of grace are not like the *Tyde*; if a man miſſeth one tyde, he may have another.

This day approaching, we muſt in the morning dreſs and fit our ſouls for the receiving of the Word. The people of *Iſrael* muſt waſh their garments before the Law was delivered to them. Our hearts muſt be waſhed by prayer and repentance, the Oracles of God being to be delivered to us. 3.

And being met together, we muſt ſet our ſelves as in the preſence of God with ſeriouſneſs and delight to hear God's ſacred Word. Take heed of diſtractions which fly-blow our duties.

We muſt labour to be bettered by every Sabbath: where the Lord laies out coſt, he looks for fruit. Freſh anointings of God are to be thirſted after; and new cubits to be added to 4.

our spiritual *stature*. We must not be like the *Salamander*, which lives in the fire, but is never the better. Christians should on these daies aspire after communion with God, and endeavour to have the illapses of his Spirit, and clearer discoveries of his love in Christ. In short, we should do on a Sabbath as *Moses*; he ascended the *Mount* that he might have a sight of God.

5. We must dedicate the whole day to God. Under the Law a single Sacrifice was appointed for other daies of the week; but two Lambs were to be offered upon the Sabbath. All this day must be spent with God: he must have worship in the publick; and when we come home, he must have family-worship. Many leave all their Religion at Church (as I have seen some do their Bibles) not hallowing God's name in their own houses, *Mal.* 3. 8. *Will a man rob God?* When men pretend to Worship God in the Temple, but cut him short of family and closet-duties on a Sabbath; this is to rob God, and steal a part of his day from him.

Good reason we should consecrate the whole Sabbath to God; and give

him *double devotion*, for God *doubles his blessings* upon us this day. As the *Manna* did rain twice as much on the sixth day, as any of the other daies: so the *Manna* of spiritual blessings falls twice as much on the Sabbath day as any other.

We must rejoyce in this day, as being a day wherein we enjoy much of God's presence, *John* 8. 56. *Abraham saw my day and rejoyced.* So when we see a Sabbath day coming, we should rejoyce. The Protestants in *France* called their Church *Paradise*, because there they met with God*. The *Jews* called the Sabbath, *desiderium dierum*, *the desire of daies*, *Isa.* 58. 13. *Thou shalt call the Sabbath a delight.* This we should look upon as the best day, as the *Queen of daies*, crowned with a blessing, *Psal.* 118. 24. *This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoyce and be glad in it.* He hath *made* all the daies, but hath *sanctified* this. We should look upon this day as a spiritual *Mart* for our soule, wherein we have holy commerce and traffick with God. This day of *Rest* is the beginning of an eternal rest. This day God sets open the *Pool of Bethesda*, in which those waters flow that refresh 6.

* Sleidan.

the broken in heart. And shall not we call this day *a delight?* The Jews on the Sabbath laid aside their Sackcloth and Mourning.

This is in a right manner to sanctifie a duty; and it is a duty wherein Christians must excite and offer violence to themselves.

Above all others, how well doth it become those into whose hands God hath put the power of Magistracy, to shew forth holy violence in causing the Lord's day to be strictly observed? What a rare pattern hath *Nehemiah* set all good Magistrates, *Neh.* 13. 15. *In those dayes saw I in Judah some treading wine-presses on the Sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and all manner of burdens which they brought into Jerusalem on the Sabbath day; and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals,* Vers. 17. *Then I contended with the Nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and prophane the Sabbath day?* How dare ye infringe the command, and make a false entry upon God's freehold? *My Lord,* your Proclamation for the pious observation of the Sabbath, and your punitive acts upon some offenders,

offenders, have given a publick Testimoney of your zeal for this day. The keeping up the honour of the Sabbath, will much keep up your Magistetial honour.

The seventh Duty wherein we must offer violence to our selves, is *holy conference*: and indeed we are backward enough to it, therefore had need herein provoke our selves, *Mal.* 3. 17. *They that feared the Lord spake often one to another.* A gracious person hath not only Religion in his *heart*, but in his *tongue*, *Psal.* 37. 30. *The Law of God is in his heart, and his tongue talketh of Judgement*: he drops holy words as Pearls. 'Tis the fault of Christians, that they do not in company provoke themselves to set good discourse on foot: it is a sinfull modesty: there is much visiting, but they do not give one anothers fouls a visit. In worldly things their tongue is *as the Pen of a ready Writer**; but in matters of Religion, they are as if their tongue *did cleave to the roof of their mouth.* As we must answer to God for *idle words*; so for *sinfull silence.* 7. *Duty.*

* *Verba fluunt scriptura.* Ovid.

Oh let us offer violence to our selves

in this, in setting abroach good discourse! What should our words dilate and expatiate upon but Heaven? The world is a great *Inne*; we are guests in this Inne. Travellers, when they are met in their *Inne*, do not spend all their time in speaking about their *Inne*; they are to lodge there but a few hours, and they are gone; but they are speaking of their home, and the Country whither they are travelling. So when we meet together, we should not be talking only about the world; we are to leave this presently; but we should talk of our heavenly Country, *Heb.* xi. 16.

That we may provoke our selves to good discourse, (for it will not be done without some kind of violence) let these considerations be duly weighed.

1. The discourse demonstrates what the heart is *. As the Glass shews what the face is, whether it be fair or foul: so the words shew what the heart is. Vain speeches discover a light feathery heart; gracious speeches are the birth of a gracious heart. The water of the Conduit shews what the Spring is.

* *Verba sunt nuncia cordis.* Bern.

2. Holy conference is very edifying.

The Apostle bids us *edifie one another*, *Ephes.* 4. 29. And how more than this way? Good conference enlightens the mind when it is ignorant; warms it when it is frozen; settles it when it is wavering. A good life adorns Religion; good discourse propagates it.

Gracious discourse makes us resemble Christ. His words were perfumed with holiness: *grace was poured into his lips*, *Psal.* 45. 2. He spake to the admiration of all: his hands wrought *Miracles*, and his tongue spake *Oracles*, *Luke* 4. 22. *All bare him witness, and wondred at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth.* Christ never came into any company, but he set good discourse on foot. *Levi* made him a feast, *Luke* 5. 29. and Christ feasted him with holy discourse. When he came to *Jacob's* Well, he presently speaks of the *water of life*, *John* 4. The more holy our speeches are, the more we are like Christ. Should not the members be like the head? 3.

God takes special notice of every good word we speak when we meet, *Mal.* 3. 16. *They that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened and heard; and a Book of Remembrance* 4.

membrance was written before him: Tamerlain that Scythian Captain had alwaies a Book by him of the names and good deserts of his servants which he bountifully rewarded. As God hath a *Bottle* for the tears of his people: so he hath a *Book* in which he writes down all their good speeches, and will make honourable mention of them at the last day.

5. Holy discourse will be a means to bring Christ into our company. The two Disciples were communing of the death and sufferings of Christ; And while they were speaking, Jesus Christ came among them, *Luke* 24. 15. *While they communed together, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.* When men entertain bad discourse, Satan draws near, and he makes one of the company; but when they have holy and gracious conference, Jesus Christ draws near, and where-ever he comes, he brings a blessing along with him. So much for the first, the offering violence to our selves.

2. 2. We must offer violence to *Satan*. Satan opposeth us both by open violence, and secret treachery. By open violence,

violence, so he is called the *Red Dragon*; by secret treachery, so he is called the *Old Serpent*. We read in Scripture of his *snares* and *darts*; he hurts more by his Snares, than by his Darts.

1. His *Violence*. He labours to storm the castle of the heart: he stirs up to passion, lust, revenge. These are called βέλη πύρπυρα, *fiery darts*, Ephes. 6. 16. because they oft set the soul on fire. Satan in regard of his fierceness is called a Lion, 1 Pet. 5. 8. *Your adversary the Devil as a roaring Lion walketh about seeking whom he may devour*. Not (saith *Chrysostom*) whom he may *bite*, but *devour* *.

2. His *Treachery*. What he cannot do by *force*, he will endeavour to do by *fraud*. Satan hath several τέχναι, subtil policies in tempting.

* οὐ, τίνα δάξῃ ἢ κλάσῃ, &c.

In suiting his temptations to the complexion and temper of the body. Satan studies the Physiognomy, and laies suitable baits. He knew *Achan*'s covetous humour, and tempted him with a wedg of Gold. He tempts the sanguine man with Beauty. 1.

2. Another subtilty is to draw men to evil, *sub specie boni*, under a pretence of good. The Pirate doth mischief by hanging

hanging out false colours; so doth Satan by hanging out the colours of Religion. He puts some men upon sinful actions, and perswades them much good will come of it. He tells them in some cases they may dispense with the Rule of the Word, and stretch their conscience beyond that line that they may be in a capacity of doing more service. As if God needed our sin to raise his glory.

3. Satan tempts to sin gradually. As the Husbandman digs about the root of a tree, and by degrees loosens it, and at last it falls. Satan steals by degrees into the heart: he is at first more modest; He did not say to *Eve* at first, *Eat the Apple*; no, but he goes more subtilly to work; he puts forth a question, *Hath God said?* sure *Eve* thou art mistaken; the bountiful God never intended to debar thee one of the best trees of the Garden. *Hath God said?* sure, either God did not say it; or if he did, he never really intended it. Thus by degrees he wrought her to distrust, and then she took of the fruit and eat. Oh take heed of Satan's first motions to sin, that seem more modest —*principiis obsta*—

He

He is first a *Fox*, and then a *Lion*.

4. Satan tempts to evil *in licitis*, in lawful things. It was lawful for *Noah* to eat the fruit of the Grape; but he took too much, and so sinn'd. Excess turns that which is good into evil. Eating and drinking may turn to intemperance. Industry in ones calling (when excessive) is covetousness. Satan draws men to an immoderate love of the creature, and then makes them offend in that which they love. As *Agrippina* poisoned her Husband *Claudius* in that meat he loved most.

5. Satan puts men upon doing good out of bad ends: if he cannot hurt them by *scandalous* actions, he will by *virtuous* actions. Thus he tempts some to espouse Religion out of policy to get preferment; and to give alms for applause, that others may see their good works, and canonize them. This hypocrisie doth leven the duties of Religion, and make them lose their reward.

6. The Devil perswades to evil by such as are good. This sets a gloss upon his temptations, and makes them less suspected. The Devil hath made use

use sometimes of the eminentest and holiest men to promote his temptations. The Devil tempted Christ by an Apostle. *Peter* dissuades him from suffering. *Abraham* a good man bids his wife equivocate: *Say, Thou art my Sister.* These are his subtilties in tempting. Now here we must offer violence to Satan, 1. By faith, 1 *Pet.* 5. 9. **Whom resist stedfast in faith.* Faith is a wise intelligent grace; it can see an hook under the bait. 2. It is an Heroick grace; it is said, ἐπὶ πᾶσιν, *above all*, to quench the fiery darts of Satan. Faith resists the Devil.

* Ἐ ἀντίστητε.

1. As it doth keep the castle of the heart that it doth not yield. It is not the being tempted makes us guilty, but giving consent. Faith enters its Protest against Satan.

2. Faith not only not yields, but beats back the temptation*. Faith holds the promise in one hand, and Christ in the other: The promise encourageth faith, and Christ strengthens it: so faith beats the enemy out of the field.

* ἀνταλλάττει τῇ ἐπαγγελίᾳ τὸ πάθος. Chrys.

2. We must offer violence to Satan by prayer. We overcome him upon our knees. As *Sampson* called to Heaven for help.

help: so a Christian by prayer fetcheth in auxiliary forces from Heaven. *In all temptations go to God by prayer.* Lord teach me to use every piece of the spiritual armour; how to hold the shield, how to wear the helmet, how to use the sword of the Spirit. Lord strengthen me in the battel; let me rather die a Conquerour, than be taken prisoner, and led by Satan in Triumph. Thus we must offer violence to Satan. There is *a Lion in the way*; but we must resolve upon fighting.

And let this encourage us to offer violence to Satan. Our enemy is beaten in part already*. Christ who is *the Captain of our salvation**, hath given Satan his deaths wound upon the Cross, *Col.* 2. 15. The Serpent is soonest killed in his head. Christ hath bruised the head of the *old Serpent*. The Devil is a chained enemy, and a conquered enemy; therefore fear not to give battel to him. *Resist him, and he will fly*: he knows no march but running away.

* Heb. 2. 10.

* διὰ παθημάτων τὸν ἀρχηγὸν αὐτῶν ἐτελείωσεν. Ignat.

3. We must offer violence to the *world*. The world shews its *Golden Apple*, it is a part of our vow in Baptism to fight under Christ's banner against the world.

world. Take heed of being drowned in the luscious delights of it. It must be a strong brain that bears heady wine. He had need have a great deal of wisdom and grace, that knows how to bear a great estate. Riches oft send up their intoxicating fumes, which make mens heads giddy with pride. *Jesurun waxed fat and kicked*, Deut. 32. 15. It is hard to climb up the hill of God with too many golden weights. Those that want the *honours* of the world, want the *temptations* of it. The world is *blandus Dæmon*, a flattering enemy. It is given to some as *Michol* to *David*, for a snare. The world shews its two breasts of *pleasure* and *profit*, and many fall asleep with the breast in their mouth. The world doth never kiss us, but with an intent to betray us. It is a silken halter. The world is no friend to grace: it chokes our love to heavenly things: the earth puts out the fire. Naturally we love the world, *Job* 31. 24. *If I have made Gold my hope*; the Septuagint renders it, *If I have been married to my Gold**. Too many are wedded to their money; they live together as man and wife. Oh let us take heed

* εἰ ἤγαξα εἰς χεῦν. Si posui aurum in conjugium.

heed of being intangled in this pleasing snare. Many who have scaped the Rock of scandalous sins, yet have sunk in the world's golden quick-sands. The sin is not in the *using* of the world, but in the *loving*, 1 *John* 2. 15. *Love not the world.* If we are Christians, we must offer violence to the world. Believers are *called out of the world*: they are *in* the world, but not *of* it, *John* 17. 16. As we say of a dying man, he is not a man for this world. A true Saint is crucified in his affections to the world, *Gal.* 6. 14. He is dead to the honours and pleasures of it. What delight doth a dead man take in pictures or musick? Jesus Christ gave himself *to redeem us from this present evil world*, *Gal.* 1. 4. If we will be saved, we must offer violence to the world. Living fish swim against the stream. We must swim against the world, else we shall be carried down the stream, and fall into the *dead Sea*. That we may offer violence to the world, let us remember,

1. It is *deceitful*; our Saviour calls it, ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου, *The deceitfulness of Riches*, *Matt.* 13. The world promiseth happines, but performeth nothing less. It promiseth

us *Rachel*, but puts us off with bleary'd *Leah*: it promiseth to satisfie our desires, but it increaseth them: it gives poison'd Pills, but wraps them in Sugar.

2. It is *defiling*, *Jam.* 1. 17. *Pure Religion is to keep himself unspotted from the world.* As if the Apostle would intimate, that the world is good for nothing but to spot: it spots first mens consciences, and then their names. It is called *αἰσχροκερδία*, *filthy lucre*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. because it makes men so filthy. They will damn themselves to get the world. *Ahab* would have *Naboth*'s Vineyard, though he swum to it in blood.

3. It is *perishing*, 1 *Joh.* 2. 17. *The fashion of the world passeth away.* The world is like a flower which withers while we are smelling to it.

4. Fourthly, We must offer violence to *Heaven*. The *Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence.* Though Heaven is given us freely, yet we must take pains for it. *Canaan* was given *Israel* freely, but they must fight with the *Canaanites*. It is not a lazy wish, or sleepy prayer will bring us to Heaven; we must offer violence. Therefore in Scripture our earnestness for Heaven is set out by those allegories

allegories and metaphors which imply violence.

1. Sometimes by striving, *Luk.* 13.24. *Strive to enter in at the strait gate.* The Greek word is ἀγωνίζεσθε, *Strive as in an Agony.*

2. Wrestling, which is a violent exercise, *Ephes.* 6.12. We are to wrestle with a body of sin, and with the powers of Hell.

3. Running in a Race, 1 *Cor.* 9.24. *So run that ye may obtain.* We have a long Race from Earth to Heaven, and but a little time to run; it will soon be sun-set. Therefore *so run.* In a Race there's not only laying aside all weights that hinder; but a putting forth all the strength of the body; a straining every joynt that men may press on with all swiftness to lay hold on the prize. Thus Saint *Paul* presseth κατὰ σκοπὸν, *towards the mark*, *Phil.*3. 14. Alas, where is this holy violence to be found?

1. Many have made themselves unfit to run this blessed Race; they are drunk with the pleasures of the world. A drunken man is unfit to run a Race.

2 Others neglect to run this Race all their life; and when sickness and

death approach, now they will begin. A sick man is very unfit to walk, much less to run a Race. I acknowledge, true Repentance is never too late; but when a man can hardly stir his hand, or lift up his eyes, now is a very unfit time to begin the Race from earth to Heaven.

4. This earnestness for Heaven is compared to fighting, which implies violence. 1 *Tim.* 6. 12. *Fight the good fight of Faith.* It is not enough to be *labourers*, but *warriers*. Indeed in Heaven, our armour shall be hung up in token of victory: but now it is *dies prælii*, a day of battel; and we must *fight the good fight of Faith.* As *Hannibal* forced a way for his Army over the Alps and craggy Rocks: So must we force our way to Heaven*. We must not only pray, but pray fervently, *Jam.* 5. 16. This is offering violence to Heaven.

* *Non est ad magna facilis assensus.* Cyprian.

I. The Reasons why there must be this offering violence to Heaven, are

1. God's indispensible command. He hath enacted a Law, that whosoever eats of the fruit of Paradise, shall eat it in the sweat of his brows, *Gen.* 3. 19.

Give

Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. The Greek word σπουδάσατε, imports an anxious solicitous care about salvation.

2. God's decree. The Lord hath in his eternal decree joyned the end and the means together; *striving* and *entring*; the *Race* and the *Crown*. And a man can no more think to come to Heaven without offering violence, than he can think to come to the end of his Journey, that never sets a step in the way. Who expects an harvest without plowing and sowing? How can we expect the harvest of glory without labour. Though our salvation in respect of *Christ* is a purchase; yet in respect of *us*, it is a conquest.

3. We must offer violence to Heaven in regard of the difficulty of the work; *Taking a Kingdom*. First, we must be pulled out of another Kingdom, *The Kingdom of darkness**. To get out of the state of nature is hard, and when that is done, and we are cut off from the wild Olive, and implanted into Christ, there is new work still to do; new sins to mortifie; new temptations to resist; new graces to quicken. A Christian

* Acts 26. 18.

must not only get Faith, but go *from Faith to Faith*, *Rom.* 1. 17. This will not be done without violence.

4. We must offer violence to Heaven, in regard of the violent assaults made against us.

1. Our own hearts oppose us. 'Tis a strange Paradox: Man who doth naturally desire happiness, yet opposeth it: he desires to be saved, yet hates that holy violence which should save him.

2. All the powers of Hell oppose us. Satan *stands at our right hand*, as he did at *Joshuah's*, *Zach.* 3. 2. Shall not we be as earnest to save our souls, as the *Dragon* is to devour them? Without violent affections, we shall never resist violent temptations.

5. We must be violent, because it is a matter of the highest importance. A man doth not beat his head about trifles, but matters wherein his life and estate are concerned. Violence is to be offered, if we consider,

1. What we shall save: *The precious soul.* What pains do we take for the feeding and enriching the body, *the brutish part*? O then what violence should

should we use for the saving the soul? The body is but a Ring of Clay, the soul is the Diamond. The soul is the glass wherein the image of God is seen*. There are in the soul some shadows and faint representations of a Deity. If Christ thought the soul worth shedding his blood, well may we think it worth spending our sweat.

* Plato.

2. Consider what we shall gain? a *Kingdom.* What violence is used for earthly Crowns and Empires; men will wade to the Crown through blood. Heaven is a Kingdom which should make us strive for it, * *Non ad sudorem tantum sed sanguinem, even to blood.* The hopes of a Kingdom (saith St. *Basil*) should carry a Christian chearfully through all labours and sufferings.

* μὴ ἱδρῶτος τὸν ἀγῶνα, ἀλλὰ καὶ ψυχῆς τὸ πόνον. Chrysost.

There must be offering violence in regard of that aptness and proneness in the best to grow remiss in Religion. When they have been quickned in a duty, they are apt to grow dead again. When they have been heat at the fire of an Ordinance, they are apt to freeze again; therefore they must be still offering violence. The heart, like the Watch, will be apt to go down; there-

6.

sore must be ever and anon wound up by prayer and meditation. The fire of devotion will soon go out, if it be not blown up. A Christian's own experience of his inconstancy in good, is cogent enough to holy violence.

Use 1. Inform. 1. Branch.

If there must be this offering violence; it shews us it is not so easie a thing as men imagine to get to Heaven. There are so many precepts to obey; so many promises to believe; so many Rocks to avoid, that it is a difficult matter to be saved *. Some phancy a fine easie way to Heaven, an idle wish, a death-bed tear; but the text tells us of *offering violence*. Alas, there is a great work to be done; *the bias of the heart is to be changed*. Man by nature doth not only *want* grace, but *hate* it. He hath an envenomed spirit against goodness, and is it easie to have the heart metamorphised? for the proud heart to be made humble; for the earthly heart to be made heavenly: can this be done without using violence? It is all uphill to Heaven, and it will make us sweat before we get to the top of the hill. Indeed Hell will be taken without

* ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ ὁ τὴν ἐπὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν ἁπλῆν καὶ ῥᾳδίαν ὁδὸν ἐπινοῶν. Ignatius.

ſtorm: the gates of Hell, like that *Iron-gate*, *Acts* 12. 10. *open of their own accord*: but if we get to Heaven, we muſt force our way: we muſt beſiege it with ſighs and tears, and get the ſcaling-ladder of faith to ſtorm it. We muſt not only *work*, but *fight*. Like thoſe *Jews*, who built the wall of *Jeruſalem* *Nehem.* 4. 17. *Every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon.* A Chriſtian is commanded upon hot ſervice; he muſt charge through the whole Army of his luſts, every one of which is ſtronger than *Goliah*. A Chriſtian hath no time to lye fallow; he muſt be either praying, or watching; either *upon the Mount*, or *in the Valley*; on the Mount of Faith, or in the Valley of Humility. Worldly things are not obtained without labour: what toiling in the ſhop? what ſweating in the furnace? and do we think Heaven will be had without labour? Do men dig for worms, and not for gold? Thoſe who are in Heaven are employed; much more ſhould they who are getting thither. The Angels are *Miniſtring ſpirits*, *Heb.* 1. 14. The wings of the Seraphims

are

are hieroglyphical, and shew us how swift they are in God's service. If the Angels in Heaven are busying themselves in noble and honourable imployment, how industrious should we be who are getting up the hill of God, and have not yet arrived at a state of glory? Is salvation-work so facil? can a man be saved *per saltum?* can he leap out of the Devil's arms into *Abraham's bosom?* Oh no, there must be offering violence. Some think, free-grace will save them; but it must be in the use of means, *Watch and Pray.* Others say, the promises will bring them to Heaven; but the promises of the Word are not to be separated from the precepts. The promise tells us of a *Crown*; but the precept saith, *So run*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24. The promises are made to encourage faith, not to cherish sloth. But say others, Christ hath died for sinners; and so they leave him to do all for them, and they will do nothing. Then the text is out of date, and all the exhortations to *striving*, and *fighting the good fight of Faith*, are in vain. Our salvation cost Christ, *Blood*; it will cost us, *Sweat.* The boat may as well get to shore without rowing, as we can to

Heaven

Heaven without offering violence.

2. It shews us the great mistake of ignorant people, who think the bare doing of duties, though in never so slight superficial a manner is enough. The text tells us of *offering violence.* 2. Branch.

1. In the business of *Prayer:* They think it is enough to mutter over a few words, though the heart be asleep all the while: what offering of violence is here? Christ was *in an Agony* at prayer, *Luk.* 22. 44. Many when they pray are rather in a Lethargy than in an Agony. *Jacob* wrestled with the Angel in prayer, *Gen.* 32. 24. The Incense was to be laid upon burning coals, *Levit.* 16. 22. *Incense* was a type of prayer, and the *Incense upon coals*, was a type of fervency in prayer. Few know what the spirit of prayer means; or what it is to have the affections boil over. When they are about the world they are all *Fire*; when they are at prayer they are all *Ice.*

2. In *Hearing of the Word:* Many people think it is enough to bring their bodies to the Assembly, but they never look to their hearts. They satisfie themselves that they have been at Church, though they have not been with

with God there. Others go to a Sermon as to the Exchange, to *hear news*; new notions that please their phancy, but do not attend to the word as about a matter of life and death. They do not go to meet with Christ in an Ordinance; to have the breathings of his Spirit, and the infusions of his Love. Alas, what little violence for Heaven is to be seen in most peoples worship? In all the Sacrifices of the Law there was fire. How can those duties be accepted, which have no fire in them; no offering of violence?

3. Branch. 3. If there must be this offering of violence to Heaven, then it shews us how dangerous moderation in Religion is. Violence and moderation are two different things. Indeed moderation in the things of the world is commendable. We should moderate our desires here; and *use the world as if we used it not**. We may, as *Jonathan*, dip the end of the Rod in honey, but not thrust it in too far: in this sense moderation is good: but moderation in matters of practical piety is sinful: it is contrary to offering violence. Moderation in the world's sense is for one not to be too zealous,

* 1 Cor. 7. 31.

not to be too fierce for Heaven. Moderation is not to venture further in Religion than may ſtand with ſelf-preſervation. As the King of *Navarr* told *Beza*, *He would launch no further into the Sea, than he might be ſure to return ſafe to Land.* To keep on the warm ſide of the hedge, is a main Article in the Politicians Creed. Moderation in the world's ſenſe is neutrality. The moderate perſon hath found out a *medium* between ſtrictneſs and prophaneneſs; he is not for debauchery, nor yet for purity. It was the advice *Calvin* gave *Melanchon*, that he ſhould not ſo affect the name of moderate, that at laſt he loſt all his zeal. To be lukewarm in matters of Religion, is far from offering violence to Heaven, *Rev.* 3. 19. *Be zealous and repent.* If any ſhall aſk us why we are ſo violent, tell them, it is for a Kingdom. If they ſhall aſk us why we make ſuch haſte in the waies of Religion, tell them, we are running an heavenly Race, and a ſoftly moderate pace will never win the prize. Moderation hath made many loſe Heaven; they have not made haſte enough; they have come too late (like the fooliſh Virgins)

Pilat. Ji, non ita commiſerunt eſſet, quia quidèd ſibi, penam referre poſſit.

Virgins) when the door hath been shut.

3. Branch. *Use 2. Reproof.* Out of this text I may draw forth several arrows of Reproof.

——quibus est alto dulce sopore frui——
* Billii Anthol. Sacr.

1. It reproves slothfull Christians *, who are *settled on their lees:* they make a lazy Profession of Religion, but use no violence. They are like the the *Lillies*, which *toil not, neither do they spin.* The *Snail* by reason of its slow motion, was reckoned among the unclean, *Levit.* 11. 30. St. *Austin* calls idlness *the burial of a man alive.* There are some faint velleities; oh that I had Heaven! but a man may desire Venison, and want it, if he doth not hunt for it *, *Prov.* 13. 4, *The soul of the sluggard wisheth and hath nothing.*

* πάντα ἐν-ζελα δόν-ζελα τοῖς ἡ ῥαθυμία.

——*Neque mola, neque farina*——

Men could be content to have the Kingdom of Heaven; but they are loth to fight for it. They chuse rather to go in a feather-bed to Hell, than to be carried to Heaven in a *fiery Chariot* of zeal and violence. How many sleep away

away, and play away their time; as if they were made like the *Leviathan*, to play in the Sea! *Psal.* 104. 26. It is a speech of *Seneca*, No man is made wise *by chance**. Sure it is, no man is saved *by chance*, but he must know how he came by it, namely, *by offering violence*. Such as have accustomed themselves to and idle lazy temper, will find it hard to shake it off. *Cant.* 5. 3. *I have put off my Coat, how shall I put it on?* The Spouse had laid her self upon the bed of sloth, an though Christ knocked at the door, she was loth to rise and let him in. Some pretend to be Believers, but are idle in the Vineyard. They pretend to make use of faith for seeing, but not for working: this Faith is phancy. O that Christians had a spirit of activity in them, 1 *Chron.* 22. 16. *Arise and be doing, and the Lord be with thee.* We may sometimes learn of our enemy*. The Devil is never idle; he *walketh about*, 1 *Pet.* 5. 8. The world is his *Diocess*, and he is every day going his visitation. Is Satan active? is the enemy upon his march coming against us? and are we asleep upon our guard? As Satan himself is not idle; so he will not endure that

* 2 *Nemo casu fit sapiens.* Sen.

* *Fas est & ab hoste doceri.*

that any of his servants should be idle. When the Devil had entred into *Judas*, how active was *Judas*! He goes to the High Priest, from thence to the band of Souldiers, and with them back to the Garden, and never left till he had betrayed Christ. Satan will not endure an idle servant; and do we think God will? How will Heathens rise up in Judgement against slothful Christians! What pains did they take in the Olympian games; they ran but for a Garland of flowers, and do we stand still who run for a Crown of Immortality? Certainly if only the violent take Heaven, the idle person will never come there. God puts no difference between these two, *slothful* and *wicked*, *Matth.* 25. 26. *Thou wicked and slothful servant.*

3. Branch. 2. It reproves the *Formalist*, who puts all his Religion in gestures, and vestures, emblems of devotion, and thinks this will entitle him to Heaven, *Rev.* 3. 1. *Thou hast a name to live and art dead.* The form and outside of Christianity is judged necessary.

1. It is a means to keep up mens credit in the world. Should they be visibly prophane, such as are sober would not come

come near them; they would be looked upon no better than baptized Heathens: therefore they must make a shew of devotion, out of policy to gain some repute and esteem among others.

2. A form serves to stop the mouth of conscience: had not they some kind of outward devotion, their conscience would fly in their face, and they would be a *terrour to themselves*: therefore they think it expedient to have *a form of Godliness*. But alas, what is all this? The Text speaks of *offering violence to Heaven*. What violence is there in a form? Here is no taking pains with the heart; a *form*, but no *power*, 2 *Tim.* 3. 5. *. Formalists are like the *Tombs* in the Church, which have their eyes and hands lift up to Heaven, but no soul. The Formalists devotion runs out most in punctilioes, and niceties: he neglects *the weightier matters of the Law, Faith and Mercy*, *Matth.* 23. 23. He scruples superstitious phancies, but makes no reckoning of sin: he is more afraid of an Hare crossing his way, than of an Harlot in his bed. He hates sanctity. Christ had no such bitter enemies as the formal Pharisees. The

* *Significat ubertatem, sed pietatis simulachrum.* Beza.

formaliſt is never violent, but in perſecuting the power of godlineſs.

3. Breach. 3. It reproves ſuch as are violent in a *bad ſenſe*: they are violent for Hell; they go thither in the ſweat of their brows, *Jer* 8. 6. *Every one turned to his courſe; as the horſe ruſheth into the battel.* A war-horſe ruſheth violently among the guns and pikes: ſo did they ruſh into ſin violently. Men are violent,

1. In oppoſing Good.
2. In purſuing Evil.

1. 1. *In oppoſing Good.* Several waies. 1. They offer violence to the Spirit of God. The Spirit knocks at the door of ſinners hearts; he waits till his head be *filled with dew*, and *his locks with the drops of the night*; but ſinners repulſe and grieve the Spirit, and ſend away this Dove from the Ark of their ſouls, *Acts* 7. 51. *Ye do alwais reſiſt the Holy Ghoſt.* The Spirit offers grace to the *ſinner*, and the ſinner offers violence to the Spirit, *Iſa* 63. 10. *They rebelled and vexed his holy Spirit*; and may not the Lord give over ſtriving? God who is willing to come in when we open to him, hath not promiſed to come again if we unkindly repulſe him.

3. They offer violence to conscience; Conscience is God's Preacher in the bosom; and this Preacher cannot flatter; it tells men of their pride, covetousness, abuse of mercy; but they, instead of being violent against their sins, offer violence to conscience; they silence and imprison conscience. But as the Prophet *Zachary*, when he was dumb called for a table-book, and did write, *Luke* 1. 63; So when conscience cannot be permitted to speak, it will write; it writes down mens sins; and when at death they shall be forced to read the hand-writing, it will make their hearts tremble, and their knees smite. This I fear is too common, for men to offer violence to their conscience: and what will be the issue? They who will not hear the voice of conscience, shall be sure to feel the worm of conscience.

3. They offer violence to God's image. The Saints (who are God's lively picture) are opposed and shot at. This is a cursed violence, *Gal.* 4. 29. *As he that was born after the flesh persecuted him who was born after the spirit; so it is now.* Christ himself is stricken at through Believers. The Church hath

been alwaies in the *Torrid zone*: The *Plowers have plowed upon her back*. The earth hath been sown with the bodies of the Saints, and watered with their blood. Persecutors, I grant, are of an antient Family. The first man that was born in the world was a Persecutor, namely *Cain*; and he hath had a numerous off-spring, *Nero*, *Trajan*, *Domitian*, *Diocletian*, *Maximinus*. *Chrysostom* saith, that the apples of his eyes fell out. *Felix* Earl of *Wartemburg* being at supper at *Auspurg*, did take an oath, that before he died, he would ride up to the spurs in the blood of the *Lutherans*; but was afterwards choked in his own blood. Persecutors are the curse of the Creation; being some of those *thorns and briars* which the earth brings forth

2. 2. Men are violent in pursuing Evil.

1. They are violent in their *Opinions*, 2 Pet. 2. 1. *Privily they shall bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them*. *Arrius* was such an one; and afterwards his bowels gushed out. And truly the spirit of *Arrius* is yet alive at this day, while men dare deny the Deity of the blessed Son of God. Many of the Heretick's of old were so violent, that

that their *Opinion* was to them a *Bible*, and some of them died in maintaining their heresies. These were the Devil's Martyrs.

2. They are violent in their *Passions* *. Anger is a short frenzy *, *Jam.* 3. 9. *The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.* In this little member there is a great world, *viz.* a *world of sin*: such as would be counted sober, yet are drunk with passion. Their prayers are cold, but their anger hot. They spit fire as the Serpent doth poison. Fiery passions without Repentance, bring men to the fiery furnace.

* Ὀλίγον γάρ τὸ θύμου κακὸν ἐστιν ἀφρονίας φέρον τὰς * Brevis insania. Sen.

3. They are violent for their *lusts*, *Tit.* 3. 3. *Serving divers lusts.* Lust is δύναμις ἐπιθυμητικὴ, an inordinate desire or impulse, provoking the soul to the gratifying its carnal desires *. *Aristotle* calls them *brutish lusts*, because when lusts are violent, they will not let reason or conscience be heard; but a man is carried brutishly to the satisfying the flesh *.

* Pravæ cupiditates sunt portæ Inferi, per quas ad mortem descendunt homines. Augustin.

* Plurimi cupiditatibus se mancipant; etiam in humano corpore plantæ brutique vitam agunt; brutum, nam usquam in plantam degenerat? & num planta in lapidem? immò ad ulla est quæ, quantum potest, non enitescat, atque se quoque attollat? denique, uno excepto homine, nemo est tam male accuratus, quod gradum suum, quid dignitatem non accurate tueatur? Mornæus.

1. Men are violent for their *drunken* lusts. Though death be in the cup, they will drink it off. One having almost lost his eye-sight, the Physitian told him there was no cure for him, unless he would leave off his excessive drinkings; then saith he, *Farewell sweet light*: he would rather lose his eye-sight than leave his drinking.

Vult lumen amittere.

2. They are violent for their *unclean* lusts. Men are said to *burn in lusts*, *Rom.* 1. 27. The Apostle intimateth that lust is a kind of *fervour*. Feavourish heats are not more pernicious to the body, than lust is to the soul. O what folly is it, for a drop of pleasure to drink a Sea of wrath *.

* *Ovo-luptates dum fundunt in evangilio, sed postea usque ad mortem animæ pungitu.* Austin.

3. They are violent for their *oppressive* lusts: they wrong and defraud others, and by violence take away their right. Instead of cloathing the naked, they make them who are cloathed naked. These birds of prey live upon rapine. They are cruel, as if with *Romulus* they had been suckled with the milk of Wolves. They smile at the curses of the poor, and grow fat with

their

their tears. They have forgotten Christ's *caveat*, *Luk.* 3. 14. *Do violence to no man.* *Ahab* violently took away *Naboth's* Vineyard, 2. *King.* 21. 11. Hell is taken by this violence, *Prov.* 4. 17. *Who drink the Wine of violence.* This wine will turn to poison at last, *Psal.* 11. 5. *Him that loveth violence, God's soul hates.*

4. They are violent for their *covetous* lusts. Covetousness is the soul's dropsy, *Amos* 7. 2. *Who pant after the dust of the earth.* They compass Sea and Land to make Mony their Proselyte *. Their god is made of gold, and to it they bow down. Those who bowed down on their knees to drink of the waters, were accounted unfit Souldiers for *Gideon*, *Judg.* 7. 6. So are those unfit for Christ, that stoop immoderately to the love of earthly things. They who are violent for the world, what have they but the wind? *Eccles.* 5. 16. *What profit hath he who hath laboured for the wind?* The world cannot enrich the soul, it cannot remove pain. If pangs of conscience come, the world can no more give comfort, than a Crown of Gold can cure the head-ach.

* *Magis aurum suffricant quam cælum.* Minut. Oct.

4. It reproves them *who* have *in part* 4. Branch.

left off that holy ſtrictneſs and violence in Religion as once they had. Their fervour is cooled and abated. What they do is ſo little, that it cannot be called violence. They ſerve God, but are not *fervent in ſpirit*. They do not leave off duty, but they grow dead in duty. They have *left their firſt love*, *Rev.* 2.4.* It is with them as fire when it is going out; or as the Sun when it is going down. Like aguiſh men: before they were in a Paroxyſm, or hot fit of zeal; but now the cold fit hath taken them, they are formal and frozen in Religion. Time was, when they *called the Sabbath a delight*, *Iſa.* 58. 13. How were their hearts raiſed in duty! how diligently did they ſeek him *whom their ſoul loved*! but now the caſe is altered; their Religion doth languiſh, and even vaniſh. Time was, when they were in an Agony, and did ſend forth *ſtrong cries* in prayer. Now the Chariot-wheels are pulled off, and the ſpirit of prayer is much abated. Their prayers do even freez between their lips: a clear ſign of the decay of grace. Theſe perſons are grown both lethargical and conſumptive.

* *Non enim charitatem amiſſe, ſed multum de illius fervore veniſſe*, inquit Ribera.

1. *Lethargical*,

1. *Lethargical*, Cant. 5. 2. *I sleep, but my heart wakes.* Though grace was alive in her, *her heart waked*; yet she was in a dull drowsie-temper, *I sleep.* When the heart burns in sin, and cools in duty, it is a sure sign of growing to a stupid lethargy.

2. *Consumptive.* There are two signs of persons in a spiritual consumption.

1. When their desire after Christ and Heaven is not so strong as it was. A consumptive man's stomach decaies. Christians have not such violent affections to heavenly things; they can desire *Corn* and *Wine*, and the luscious delights of the earth; but, Christ is less precious; they are not in pangs of desire after him, a sad symptom their grace is in a consumption.

2. When they are not so vigorous in motion. A man that is lively and stiring at his work, it is a sign he is in health; but when he is listless, and cares not to stir, or put his hand to any thing; a sign nature is a declining. So when men have no heart to that which is good, they care not to put themselves upon the exercises of Religion; they have lost a spirit of activity for God; they

they ſerve him in a faint ſickly manner; 'tis a ſign they are conſumptive.

When the pulſe can ſcarce be felt, it beats ſo low; men are near dying: So when thoſe who were once violent for Heaven, but now we can ſcarce perceive any good in them, the pulſe beats low, grace is *ready to dye*, *Rev.* 3. 2. To you who have abated in your holy violence, and are grown remiſs in duty, let me expoſtulate with you, as the Lord did by the Prophet, *Jer.* 2. 5. *What iniquity have your Fathers found in me?* What evil have you found *in God*, that you leave off your former ſtrictneſs? Hath not God fed you with Manna from above, and given you his holy Spirit to be your guide and comforter? Hath he not made you ſwim in a Sea of mercy? What evil have you found in *Prayer*, that you are leſs violent in it? Have not you had ſweet intercourſe with God? Have not you ſometimes been melted and enlarged, inſomuch that you have thought your ſelves in the ſuburbs of Heaven when you have been upon this Mount? Hath not the Dove of Prayer brought an Olive branch of peace in its mouth? What evil

* Quidam ἀνάβασιν; mori! vicina. Parzus.

evil have you found *in the Word*? Time was when you did take this Book and *eat it*, and it was *honey in your mouth*? Hath the Word less vertue in it now? Are the Promises like *Aaron's dry Rod* withered and sapless? What iniquity have you found *in the wayes of God*, that you have abated your former violence in Religion? *O remember whence you are fallen and repent, and do your first works, Rev.* 2. 5. Consider seriously,

1. The less violence for Heaven, the less peace. Our consciences are never at peace in a drowsie state. It is the lively acting of grace makes the heart calm and serene. These two go together, walking *in the fear of God*, and *in the comforts of the Holy Ghost*, *Act* 9. 31. Christian, if once thou growest remiss in Religion, conscience will chide. If thou belongest to God, he will never let thee be quiet, but will send some affliction or other to awaken thee out of thy security, and make thee recover that active lively frame of heart as once thou hadst.

2. You that grow more dead in God's service, and *leave your first love*, give great advantage to Satan. The less violent

lent you are, the more violent he is; the less you pray, the more he tempts: and what a case are you now in? How can grace that is weak and sickly withstand violent temptations; Hence it is, God suffers his own people sometimes to fall into sin, as a just punishment of their lukewarmness, and to make them more zealous and violent for the future.

3. Your remisness in Religion, though it may not damn you, it will dammage you. You will lose that degree of glory, which else you might have had. Though your remisness may not lose your Crown, it will lessen it, and make it weigh lighter.

4. The more lazy a Christian's desires are, the more lively his corruptions. The weaker the body grows, the stronger the disease grows. Oh therefore pray for quickning grace, *Psal.* 143. 11. Beg fresh gales of the Spirit to blow upon you. Never leave till you have recovered that holy violence which once you had.

2. Branch. Reproof. 2. It reproves those who have quite left off all violence: they have left off reading and praying in their family. There is not so much as a face of Religion

Religion to be ſeen, they are fallen finally *. Such were *Joaſh*, *Jehu*, *Julian*. The goodly building of their profeſſion which others admired, now hath not one ſtone left upon another.

* In quibus principium fervet, medium tepet, exitus alget; illæ hypocritæ fuiſſe patet, quæ virtutis curam non conſequuntur. Paræus.

But, Why do men thus run retrograde in their motion, and quite throw off that violence which they ſeem'd once to have?

1. Becauſe they never had a principle of ſpiritual life *. Things that move from a principle of life are conſtant, as the motion of the pulſe: but things artificial are apt to be at a ſtand, and their motion ceaſeth. As a clock when the weights are hung on, goes; but take off the weights, and it ſtands. So the Apoſtate never moves in Religion, but for gain and applauſe; and when theſe weights are taken off, he is at a ſtand, he goes no further. That branch muſt needs wither that hath no root to grow upon.

* Οὐκ ἔχει ἐνέδραν ἐν ἑαυτῷ.

2. Men throw off all violence, and degenerate into Apoſtaſie, becauſe they never did duties of Religion with delight. St. *Paul delighted in the Law of God in the inward man*, *Rom.* 7. 22. It was his

his Heaven to serve God. A man that delights in pleasure will never give over; but the Apostate never had any true delight in the waies of God; he was rather forced with fear, than drawn with love: he served a Master that he never cared for; no wonder then he leaves his service.

3. Men degenerate into Apostasie through unbelief, *Psal.* 78. 22. *They believed not in God*, vers. 41. *They turned back and tempted God.* Sinners have jealous thoughts of God; they distrust his love, therefore desert his service: they think they may pray, and hear, and to no purpose, *Mal.* 3. 14. *What profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances?* We may draw near to God in duty, but He will never draw near to us in mercy. Thus Unbelief and Atheism prevailing, the livery of Religion is presently thrown off, and all former violence for Heaven ceaseth. Infidelity is the Mother of Apostasie.

4. Men leave off their former violence, and prove *Judasses* and Devils because they love something else more than Religion. There is some lust or other their heart is ingaged to, and

their

their violence for sin hath destroyed their violence for Religion. *Solyman* the great Turk, seeing many Christians go over to Turcism, he asked them, What moved them to turn Turks? They replyed, *They did it to be eased of their Taxes.* They were drawn from God through the prevalency of covetousness. If there be any lust in the heart predominant, it will get head, and destroy all former zeal for Religion. *Abimelech* a Bastard, destroyed *threescore and ten of his Brethren upon one stone*, *Judg.* 9. 15. If there be any lust the heart runs after, this bastard-sin will destroy threescore and ten duties; it will murder all that violence for Heaven which a man did once seem to have.

5. Men leave off former violence out of pusillanimity: if they are violent in Religion, they fear they may lose their profits and preferments; nay, their lives. The coward never yet won the field. When carnal fear grows violent, all violence for Heaven is at an end.

—Incipit esse malus, qui timet esse bonus—

Many of the *Jews* who were great followers

lowers of Christ, when they *saw the swords and staves*, left him. *Prov.* 26. 25. *In the fear of man there is a snare.* Carnal fear makes sin appear less than it is, but danger greater.

6. Men leave off violence for Heaven for want of patience. Sensible feeling of joy is with-held, and they have not patience to stay for the full recompence of reward. Hypocrites are all for *present pay*; and if they have not that suddenly which they desire, they bid adieu to Religion; and say, as that wicked King, 2 *King.* 6. 33. *Why should I wait for the Lord any longer?* They consider not that God is a *free Agent*, and will dispense his blessings in the fittest season, but they go to tye God up to their time. They forget that joy is a part of the reward, and would they have the reward and their work not yet finished? Doth the servant use to receive his pay before his work is done? *Jam.* 5. 7. *The Husbandman waits for his precious fruits of the earth*: He doth not look to sow and reap in a day. But Hypocrites are alwaies in haste; they would reap joy, before they have done sowing the seed of Repentance: and because comfort

is a while deserted, they are offended; they will serve God no longer: their patience is at an end, therefore their violence is at an end.

7. Men leave off holy violence, and degenerate into prophaneness, out of a just judgement of God, leaving them to themselves; they oft resisted the Spirit, and sent it away sad from them, and now as a just judgement, God saith, *My Spirit shall no longer strive*; and if this wind doth not blow upon their sails, they cannot move. If this Sun withdraw from their climate, they must needs freeze in impenitency. They before sinned against clear convictions; they silenced conscience, and God hath seared it. And now if an Angel should preach to them from Heaven, it would do them no good. O how dismal is this! the thoughts of it may strike us into an holy consternation. Thus we see why men apostatize and leave off their violence for Heaven.

Well, but what do they get by this? let us see what a purchase Apostates make.

They proclaim their folly; for all their former violence for Heaven is

loſt. He who runs half the Race, and then faints, loſeth the Garland, *Ezek.* 18. 24. *When the righteous turneth away from his righteouſneſs, all his righteouſneſs that he hath done ſhall not be mentioned.* All mens prayers and tears are loſt. The Apoſtate unravels all that he hath been doing. He is like a man that with a penſil draws a curious picture, and then comes with his ſpunge and wipes it out again, *Gal.* 3. 4. *Have ye ſuffered ſo many things in vain?* Perhaps, for Religion a man hath ſuffered many a reproach and affront; and have ye ſuffered all this in vain? Here is folly indeed.

2. It will be bitterneſs in the end, *Jer.* 2. 19. *Know therefore that it is an evil and bitter thing that thou haſt forſaken the Lord.* Men by leaving off their violence for Heaven, get a thorn in their conſcience, a blot in their name, a curſe in their ſouls. What got *Judas* by his Apoſtaſie but an halter? So that it will be *bitterneſs in the end.* The Apoſtate when he dies drops as a wind-fall into the Devil's mouth.

5. Branch. 5. It reproves thoſe who put off this violence for the Kingdom till *old age.* When they are fit for no other work,

work, then they will begin this. No man saith, I will learn my trade when I am old. It is imprudence for one to begin to work for Heaven, when he is *past his labour*. There is a night of sickness and death coming, and our Saviour saith, *The night cometh when none can work*, *Joh.* 9. 4. Sure a man can put forth but little violence for Heaven when old age, and old sins are upon him. Besides, how unworthy and dis-ingenuous is it, to give the Devil the flower of youth! and God the dregs of old age! Therefore God rejected *Cain*'s Sacrifice, because it was stale before he brought it, *Gen.* 4. 3. There is little hope of their salvation, who are never violent for Heaven, till their disease grows violent.

6. It reproves those that are so far from using this violence for Heaven, that they deride it. These are your zealous ones: 2 *Pet.* 3. 3. *In the last daies there shall be scoffers*. Holy walking is become the object of derision, *Psal.* 69. 12. *I am become the song of the drunkards*. This shews a vile heart. There are some, who though thy have no goodness themselves, yet honour 6. Branch.

them that are good. *Herod* reverenced *John Baptist*. But what Devils are they who scoff at goodness, and reproach others for doing that which God commands! This age produceth such as sit in *the chair of scorners*, and throw their squibs at Religion. In *Bohemia*, when some of the Martyrs were the next day to suffer, they comforted themselves with this, that this was their last Supper, and to morrow they should feast with Christ in Heaven; a Papist standing by, asked them in a jear, if Christ had any Cooks in Heaven to dress their Supper? Oh take heed of such an *Ishmael*-spirit! It is a sign of a man given over to the Devil. God *scorneth the scorner*, *Prov.* 3. 34. And sure he shall never live with God, whose company God scorns.

3. Branch. 7. It reproves them who instead of taking Heaven by force, keep it off by force; as if they were afraid of being happy; or as if a Crown of glory would hurt them. Such are

1. The *ignorant*, who shut their eyes against the light, and refuse to be taught the way to Heaven, *Hosea* 4. 6. *Thou hast rejected Knowledge.* The Hebrew word,

word * signifies, to reject with disdain. As I have read of a *Scotch* Bishop, who *thanked God he never knew what the Old and New Testament was* *. I wonder where that Bishop took his text.

* ΌΝΟ

* Act. & Mon. Im.

2. The *prophane*, who hate to be admonished, and had rather die than reform, *Amos* 5. 10. *They hate him that rebuketh in the gate.* These keep off Heaven by force. Such were those, *Acts* 13. 46. *Seeing you put away the Word from you.* The Greek word may be rendred, *seeing* you shuff it away with your shoulders. As if a sick man should bolt out the Physician, lest he should cure him, *Job* 21. 14. *Who say unto the Almighty depart from us.* God is loth to be gone; he woes and beseecheth sinners to accept of terms of mercy; he is loth to be gone, but sinners will have him gone; *They say to him, Depart.* May not we say to these, *quis effascinavit? who hath bewitched you?* What madness beyond Hyperbole is this, that you should not only forsake mercy, but fight against it; as if there were danger in going to Heaven. These who put away Salvation from them, are *felo de se*, they do wilfully perish; they would not

hear of any thing that should save them. Were it not a sad Epitaph to be written upon a man's Tomb-stone, Here lies one that murdered himself? This is the condition of desperate sinners, they keep off Heaven by force; they are self-murderers. Therefore God writes their Epitaph upon their grave, *Hosea* 13. 9. *O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self.*

Use 3. Examination.

3. Let us then examine whether we put forth this holy violence for Heaven? What is an empty Profession without this? like a Lamp without Oyl. Let us all ask our selves, What violence do we use for Heaven?

1. Do we strive with our hearts to get them into an holy frame? How did *David* awaken all the powers of his soul to serve God, *Psal.* 57. 8. *I my self will awake early.* The heart is like a Bell that is a long while a raising.

2. Do we set time apart to call our selves to an account, and try our evidences for Heaven, *Psal.* 77. 6. *My Spirit made diligent search.* Do we take our hearts as a Watch all in pieces, to see what is amiss and mend it. Are we curiously inquisitive into the state of our

souls?

ſouls? Are we afraid of painted grace, as of painted happineſs?

3. Do we uſe violence in prayer? Is there fire in our Sacrifice? Doth the wind of the Spirit filling our ſails, cauſe *groans unutterable? Rom.* 8. 26. Do we pray in the morning as if we were to die at night?

4. Do we thirſt for the living God? Are our ſouls big with holy deſires, *Pſal.* 73. 25. *There is none upon earth my ſoul deſires beſides thee.* Do we deſire holineſs as well as Heaven? Do we deſire as much to look like Chriſt, as to live with Chriſt? Is our deſire conſtant? Is this ſpiritual pulſe ever beating?

5. Are we ſkilled in ſelf denial? Can we deny our eaſe, our aimes, our intereſt? Can we croſs our own will to fulfill God's? Can we behead our beloved ſin? To pluck out *the right eye* requires violence.

6. Are we lovers of God? It is not how much we *do*, but how much we *love*. Doth love command the caſtle of our hearts? Doth Chriſt's beauty and ſweetneſs *conſtrain us?* 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. Do we love God more than we fear Hell?

7. Do we keep our ſpiritual watch? do we ſet ſpies in every place, watching our thoughts, our eyes, our tongues? When we have prayed againſt ſin, do we watch againſt temptation? The Jews having ſealed the ſtone of Chriſt's Sepulchre, *ſett a watch*, *Matth.* 27.66. After we have been at the Word, or Sacrament (that ſealing Ordinance) do we ſet a watch?

8. Do we preſs after further degrees of ſanctity? *Phil.* 3. 13. *Reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before**. A good Chriſtian is a wonder; he is the moſt contented, yet the leaſt ſatisfied; he is contented with a little of the world, but not ſatisfied with a little grace; he would ſtill have more Faith, and be *anointed with freſh Oyl*. *Paul* deſired to *attain unto the reſurrection of the dead*, *Phil.* 3. 11. that is, he endeavoured (if poſſible) to arrive at ſuch a meaſure of grace as the Saints ſhall have at the Reſurrection.

* τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν.

9. Is there an holy emulation in us? do we labour to out-ſhine others in Religion? To be more eminent for love and good works?

Homer. Il. Ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν ἐγγὺς ἴσαν ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισι μένοντες

Do

Do we ſomething which is ſingular? *Matth.* 5. 47. *What do you more than others**?

* περισσὸν τι ποιεῖτε; ἴδιον τι quod vulgo. Beza.

10. Are we got above the world? though we walk on Earth, do we trade in Heaven? Can we ſay as *David*, *Pſal.* 139. 17. *I am ſtill with thee.* This requires violence; for motions upward are uſually violent.

11. Do we ſet our ſelves alwaies under God's eye? *Pſal.* 16. 8. *I have ſet the Lord alwaies before me.* Do we live *ſoberly* and *godlily*, remembring whatever we are doing, our Judge looks on?

If it be thus with us, we are happy perſons. This is the holy violence the text ſpeaks of, and is the right way of taking the Kingdom of God. And ſurely never did *Noah* ſo willingly put forth his hand to receive the Dove into the Ark, as Jeſus Chriſt will put forth his hand to receive us into Heaven.

4. It exhorts all Chriſtians to this holy violence for Heaven. But before I preſs the exhortation, let me remove ſome Objections that may be made againſt this bleſſed violence. Uſe 4. Exhortation.

1. But we have no power of our ſelves *Obj.* 1.

ſelves to ſave our ſelves? you bid us be violent, as if you ſhould bid a man tied faſt in fetters to walk.

Anſw. 'Tis true, We cannot till grace come, effectually operate to our own ſalvation. Before converſion we are purely paſſive; and when God bids us convert and turn, this is to ſhew us what we *ought* to do, not what we *can* do. Yet let us do *quoad poſſe*, what we are able.

1. We have power to avoid thoſe Rocks, which will certainly ruine our ſouls; I mean, *groſs ſins*. A man needs not to be in bad company; he needs not ſwear, or tell a lye; nor would he do it if it were by Law death to ſwear an Oath.

2. We have power to put our ſelves upon the uſe of means, praying, reading, holy conference; this will condemn men at the laſt day; they do not act ſo vigorouſly in their ſphere as they might; they do not uſe the means, and try whether God will give grace. God will come with that ſilencing queſtion at laſt, *Why didſt not thou put my money to the Exchangers? Matth.* 25. 17. Why didſt not thou improve that power I gave thee? 2. Though

2. Though we have not power to ſave our ſelves, yet we muſt purſue after ſalvation, becauſe God hath made a promiſe *of grace*, as well as *to grace*. He hath promiſed to *circumciſe our hearts*; to put *his Spirit within us*; to *inable* us to walk in his ſtatutes, *Ezek.* 36. 27. So that by prayer we are to put the bond in ſuit, and to preſs God with his own promiſe. Though I will not ſay with the *Arminians*, upon our endeavour God is bound to give grace; yet he is not wanting to them that ſeek his grace:* Nay, he denies his grace to none but them that wilfully refuſe it, *Pſal.* 81. 11. *Iſrael would none of me.*

* *Deus volentibus non deeſt.*

2. But this offering violence is hard, and I ſhall never be able to go thorow it. *Object.* 2.

Admit it be hard, yet it is a duty, and there is no diſputing duty. God hath made the way to Heaven hard. *Reſp.* 1.

To try our Obedience. A child obeys his Father, though he command him hard things. *Peter's* obedience and love was tryed when Chriſt bade him come to him upon the water. 1.

God doth it that he may raiſe the price of heavenly things. Were the Kingdom of glory eaſily obtained, we 2.

ſhould

ſhould not have valued it to its worth. Such is our nature, that we ſlight things which are eaſily come by. If Pearls were common, they would ſoon fall in their price. If Chriſt and Heaven might be had without violence, theſe bleſſings of the firſt magnitude would not have been had in ſuch high veneration.

But let not the difficulty be objected. What though ſalvation-work be hard.

1. Is it not harder to lye in Hell? Is not ſuffering vengeance worſe than offering violence?

2. We do not argue ſo in other things. An eſtate is hard to come by, therefore we will ſit ſtill: No, difficulty doth the more whet and ſharpen our indeavour; and if we take ſuch pains for theſe inferiour things, how ſhould we for that which is more noble and ſublime! The profit will abundantly countervail the labour.

3. Though the buſineſs of Religion at firſt ſeems hard, yet when once we are entred into it, it is pleaſant. When the wheels of the ſoul are oiled with grace, now a Chriſtian moves in Religion with facility and delight. *Rom.* 7. 22. *I delight*

I delight in the Law of God in the inward man. Christ's yoke at the first putting on seems heavy; but when once it is on, it is easie. To serve God, to love God, to enjoy God, is the sweetest freedom in the world. The Poets say, the top of *Olympus* is alwaies quiet*: The first climbing up the rocky hill of Heaven is hard to flesh and blood; but when we are gotten up towards the top, there is peace and delight; we see a pleasant prospect, and are ready to cry out as *Peter* on the Mount of transfiguration, *It is good to be here.* What *hidden Manna* do we now find! this is the anticipation or foretast of glory.

* *Olympi cacumen semper quietum.*

3. But if I put my self upon this violent exercise in Religion, then I shall lose that pleasure I have in my sin, my mirth and melody, and I shall exchange delight for labour; and so I shall be no more *Naomi*, but *Marah.* Voluptuous persons speak as the Fig-tree in the Parable, *Judg.* 9. Shall *I leave my fatness and sweetness*, all my former pleasures, and now offer violence to Heaven, live a strict mortified life? This crosseth the stream of corrupt nature. *Object.* 3.

Leave the pleasure in sin! The Scripture *Answ.* 1.

pture doth ſo deſcribe ſin, that one would think there ſhould be little pleaſure in it. The Scripture calls it,

1. Ὀφείλημα, a *debt*. Sin is compared to a debt of *ten thouſand talents*, *Matth.* 18. 24. A talent of gold among the *Hebrews*, was valued at almoſt four thouſand pounds. Ten thouſand talents is a figurative ſpeech, to expreſs how great a debt ſin is; and do you call this a pleaſure? is it any pleaſure for a man to be in debt?

2. The Scripture calls ſin a *diſeaſe*, *Iſa.* 1. 5. *The whole head is ſick.* Is it any pleaſure to be ſick? Though all do not feel this ſickneſs, yet the leſs the diſtemper is felt, the more mortal.

3. The Scripture compares ſin to *Gall and Wormwood*, *Deut.* 29. 18. It breeds a bitter worm in the conſcience. What a worm did *Spira* feel? Sin ſtings a man with wrath, *Job.* 3. 34. And do you call this a pleaſure? ſure you *put bitter for ſweet*, *Iſa.* 5. 20.

2. The pleaſures of ſin do gratifie only the ſenſitive part of man, not the rational. Pleaſures are called *carnal*, becauſe they delight only the body. How abſurd was that ſpeech of the rich man in

in the Gospel, when he was speaking of his store of goods, and his barns being full, *Soul, take thine ease, Luke* 12. 19. He might have said more properly, *Body take thine ease*; for his soul was never the better for his riches, nor could it feel any delight in them. Though his barns were full, his soul was empty. Therefore when Satan tells thee, If thou usest violence for Heaven, thou wilt lose all thy pleasures: ask him, what pleasures are they Satan? such as please only the *senses*, they do not delight the mind; they do not comfort the conscience; they are such delights wherein the bruit creatures do exceed me.

3. These sugred pleasures in sin the Scripture saith are but *πρόσκαιρα, for a season*, *Heb.* 11. 25. Like fire in straw which makes a blaze, but is presently out, 1 *Joh.* 2. 17. *The world passeth away, and the lusts thereof.* It passeth away swiftly as a ship under sail. Worldly pleasures *perish in the using*; like a flying shadow, or flash of lightning; and are these to be preferred before an *eternal weight of glory?*

4. The present sweetness which is in sin will turn to bitterness at last. Like the

the Book the Prophet eat, *Ezek.* 3. 3. *Sweet* in the mouth, but *bitter* in the belly. Hony is sweet, but it turns to choler. Sin is a *sweet poison**, it delights the palate, but torments the bowels. When once the sinner's eyes come to be opened at death, and he feels some sparks of God's wrath in his conscience, then he will cry out for horrour, and be ready to lay violent hands upon himself. We may say of the pleasures of sin, as *Solomon* of wine, *Prov.* 23. 32. *Look not on the wine when it is red, when it shews its colour in the glass, afterwards it bites like a Serpent**. So look not on the smiling pleasures of sin; be not delighted with its beauty, but affrighted with its sting*? Do the damned in Hell feel any pleasure now in their sins? Hath their *cup of wrath* one drop of hony in it? Oh remember, after the *golden Crowns*, and *womens hair*, come the Lions teeth, *Rev.* 9. 8. Thus I have answered the first part of the Objection; I shall lose all my pleasures in sin.

* Dulce venenum. Bern.

* ὀπίσω ὑφαὶς ὄφεως δηγμάτιον δριμύτερον.

* τί βαθὺ δυσμαπέσιον ὀπίσω, τί πάχον κακῶς, ἢ λυπηρὸν ἁμαρτία, ἢ φοβερόν. Chr. Epist.

2. If I put forth this violence in Religion, I shall exchange my delight for labour.

labour. I must dig a way through the Rock, and while I work I must weep.

Resp. Though you must use violence, yet it is a sweet violence; it is a labour turned into delight, *Psal.* 138. 5. *They shall sing in the waies of the Lord.* To send out faith as a spy to view the heavenly *Canaan*, and pluck a bunch of Grapes there; what delight is here? *Rom.* 15. 13. *Joy in believing.* To love God (in whom all excellencies are combined) how sweet is it! To love beauty is delightful. To walk among the promises as among beds of spices, and taste the fruit, oh how pleasant! The labour of a Christian brings peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

——*Sed juvat ipse labor*——

And whereas it is said that this holy violence takes away our joy, and while we work we must weep; I answer, a Christian would not be without these tears. The tears of a Saint (saith *Bernard*) have more true joy in them, than all worldly delight. The *Oyl of joy* is for mourners, *Isa.* 61. 3.

4. I would use this violence for *Object.* 4.

Heaven, but I shall expose my self to the censure and scorn of others. They will wonder to see me so altered, and think it nothing but a religious phrensie.

Resp. 1. Consider who reproach thee; they are the wicked*; such as if Christ were alive on earth, would reproach him. They are blinded by the God of the world, 2 *Cor.* 4. 4. It is as if a blind man should reproach a beautifull face.

* Μέμνησο δὲ, ὅτι ἐὰν νῦν ἀμαύρωσι τοῖς αὐτοῖς, οἱ καταγελῶντες οὐ πρότερον, ὕστερον τὸ ὕστερον θαυμάσουσιν. Epict.

2. What do they reproach thee for? 'tis for offering violence for Heaven. Is it a disgrace to be labouring for a Kingdom? Tell them thou art doing the work that God hath set thee about. Better they should reproach thee for working in the Vineyard, than God damn thee for not working.

3. Jesus Christ was reproached for thy sake, *Heb.* 12. 2. *He endured the shame of the Cross*; and wilt not thou be contented to bear reproaches for him? These are but the chips of the Cross, which are rather to be despised than laid to heart.

Object. 5. If I use this holy violence, and turn religious, then I shall lose such yearly profits

profits which my ſin hath brought in. As *Amaziah* ſaid, *What ſhall I do for the hundred Talents?* 2 *Chron.* 25. 9.

Is there any profit in ſin? did ever any one thrive upon that Trade? by that time you have caſt up the reckoning you will find but little profit. *Reſp.* 1.

1. By the incomes that ſin brings in, thou treaſureſt up vengeance, *Rom.* 2. 5. While thou putteſt unjuſt gain in thy bag, God puts wrath in his viol; and will you call this profit?

Ἔργον δὲτ' ἀδίκων χέλιωρ ἐπίκτητον ἀμοιβῆς. Heſiod.

Whatever mony a man gets in a ſinful way, he muſt pay intereſt for it in hell.

2. That cannot be for thy profit, which makes thee come off a loſer at laſt. Thou loſeſt Heaven and thy ſoul; and what can countervail this loſs? *What is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul?* *Matth.* 16. 26. God (ſaith *Chryſoſtome*) hath given a man two eyes; if he loſe one, he hath another; but he hath but one ſoul, and if that be loſt, he is undone for ever.

But I have ſo much buſineſs in the world, *Object.* 6.

world, that I can find no time for this holy violence. As the King of *Macedon* said, when they presented him with a book treating of *Happiness*, ἐκ σχολῆς, *I am not at leisure.*

Resp. 1. See the folly of of this objection: What is the main business of life, but looking after the soul? and for men to say they are so immersed in the world, that they cannot mind their souls, is most absurd and irrational. This is to make the greater give way to the lesse. As if an Husbandman should say, he is so busie in angling, or looking after his Bees, that he hath no time to plow or sow. What is his occupation but plowing? Such a madness is it to hear men say, they are so taken up about the world, that they have no time for their souls.

Resp. 2. Could God find time to think of thy salvation? could Jesus Christ find time to come into the world, and be here above thirty years in carrying on this great design of thy Redemption, and canst thou find no time to look after it? Is the getting a little mony that which obstructs this violence for Heaven? *Thy mony perish with thee.*

Resp. 3. Canst thou find time for thy body? time

time to eat and sleep? and not find time for thy soul? canst thou find time to employ about thy recreation? and no time to employ about thy salvation? canst thou find time for idle visits? and no time to visit the Throne of Grace?

Oh take heed thou goest not to Hell in the croud of worldly business. *Joshua*, who was a Commander of an Army, yet his work as a Souldier was not to hinder his work as a Christian: he must pray as well as fight; and take the Book of the Law in his hand, as well as the Sword, *Josh.* 1.8.

Thou, whosoever thou art that makest this Objection about worldly business, let me ask thee, Dost thou think in thy conscience that this will be a good excuse at the last day, when God shall ask thee, why didst thou not take pains for Heaven? thou shalt say, Lord, I was so steeped in worldly business, that I was hindered. Were it a good plea for a servant to say to his Master, he was so drunk that he could not work? Truly, 'tis much like thine, to say thou wert so drunk with the cares of the world, that thou couldest not be violent for the Kingdom.

Having answered these Objections, let me re-assume the exhortation, pressing all Christians to this violence for the heavenly Kingdom. As *David's* three Worthies ventured their lives, and brake thorow the hoast of the *Philistims* for water, 2 *Sam.* 23. 16. Such a kind of violence must we use, breaking through all dangers for obtaining the *Water of life.*

Motive. 1. 1. Consider the deplorable condition we are in by nature; a state of misery and damnation; therefore what violence should we use to get out of it! Were one plunged into quick-sands, would he not use violence to get out? Sin is a quicksand, and is it not wisdom to extricate our selves out? *David* being encompassed with enemies, said, *His soul was among Lions*, *Psal.* 57. 4. 'Tis true in a spiritual sense, our soul is among Lions. Every sin is a Lion that would devour us, and if we are in the Lion's Den, shall we not use violence to get out? The Angels used violence to *Lot*; they laid hold on him, and pulled him out of *Sodom*, *Gen.* 19. 16. Such violence must be used to get out of the spiritual *Sodom.* It is no safety to

stay

ſtay in the enemies quarters.

2. It is poſſible that in the uſe of means we may arrive at happineſs. Impoſſibility deſtroies endeavour: but here is a *door of hope* opened. The thing is feaſible. It is not with us as with the damned in Hell; there is a tomb-ſtone rolled over them. But while we are under the ſound of *Aaron's Bell*, and the Silver Trumpet of the Goſpel is blown in our ears, while the Spirit of Grace breaths on us, and we are on this ſide the grave; there is great hope that by holy violence we may win Paradiſe. An abſolute impoſſibility of ſalvation is only for them who have ſinned the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt, and cannot repent, but who theſe are is a ſecret ſealed up in God's Book: elſe here is a great encouragement to all to be ſerious and earneſt in the matters of eternity, becauſe they are yet in a capacity of mercy, no final ſentence is already paſſed; God hath not yet taken up the drawbridge of mercy. Though the gate of Paradiſe is *ſtrait*, yet it is not ſhut. This ſhould be as Oyl to the wheels, to make us lively and active in the buſineſs of ſalvation. Therefore as the Huſband- Motive. 2.

man *plows in hope, James* 5. So we should pray in hope; do all our work for Heaven in hope; for the white flag of mercy is yet held forth. So long as there was Corn to be had in *Egypt*, the Sons of *Jacob* would not sit starving at home, *Gen.* 42. 3. So there is a Kingdom to be obtained; therefore let us not sit starving in our sins any longer.

3. Motive. This violence for Heaven is the grand business of our lives: What did we come into the world for else? we did not come hither only to eat and drink, and wear fine cloaths; but the end of our living is, to be violent for the Kingdom of glory. Should the body only be tended, this were to trim the scabbard, and let the blade rust: to preserve the lumber, and let the child be burnt. God sends us into the world as a Merchant sends his Factor to trade for him beyond the Seas. So God sends us hither to follow a spiritual trade, to serve him and save our souls. If we spend all our time *aut aliud agendo, aut nihil*, in dressing and pampering our bodies, or idle visits, we shall give but a sad account to God, when he shall send us a letter of summons by death,

and

and bid us *give an account of our Stewardſhip*. Were not he much to be blamed that ſhould have a great deal of Timber given him to build him an houſe, and he ſhould cut out all this brave Timber into chips? Juſt ſo is the caſe of many; God gives them precious time in which they are to provide for a Kingdom, and they waſte this time of life, and cut it out all into chips. Let this excite violence in the things of God; it is the main errand of our living here; ſhall we go out of the world and forget our errand?

4. How violent are the wicked in waies of ſin! violent for their malicious luſts, *Prov.* 1. 16. *Their feet run to evil* *. Violent for their unclean luſts. *Amnon* offered violence to his Siſter, he would have his luſt, though it coſt him his life, Sinners tire out themſelves in the Devil's drudgery, *Jer* 9. 5. *They weary themſelves to commit iniquity*. They are out of breath with ſin, yet not out of love with ſin, *Jer.* 50. 38. *They are mad upon their Idols*. So violent were the Jews, that they would ſpare no coſt in their

4. Motive.

* *Quòd utroque pede ruuntur, natatur & feſtinatio & impetus.* Cartwr.

their Idolatrous worship, *Isa.* 46. 6. *They laviſh gold out of the bag.* So fiercely were they bent upon Idolatry, that they would ſacrifice their Sons and Daughters to their Idol gods, *Jer.* 32. 35. *They built the high places of Baal to cauſe their Sons and Daughters to paſs thorow the fire.* Were men thus violent for their luſts and Idols; and ſhall not we be violent for a Kingdom? Nay, you that are now ingrafted into Chriſt, how violent perhaps have ſome of you been formerly in evil? how did you once ſpend your ſelves in a ſinful way! like *Paul*, who before his converſion *breathed out threatning and ſlaughter againſt the Diſciples of the Lord*, *Act.* 9. 1. Perhaps you have been violent in drawing others to ſin, you have been tempters to them; and perhaps ſome of them whom you have ſeduced to ſin, are now crying out of you in Hell, and ſaying, They had never come there if it had not been for your example; ſhould not the conſideration of this humble you? ſhould not this make you the more violent in Religion, that you may bring ſome glory to God before you die? ſhould not you be as induſtrious to ſave

ſouls,

ſouls, as you have been to damn them? Were you to live to the age of *Methuſalem*, you could never do God ſervice ſufficient for the diſhonour you have done to him.

5. This holy violence hath much delight mingled with it, *Prov.* 3. 17. *All her waies are pleaſantneſs.* Though the way of Religion hath thorns in it (in reſpect of perſecution) yet it is full of Roſes, in reſpect of that inward peace and content that the ſoul finds in it. A man is violent at his recreation; but there is an inward delight he takes in it which ſweetens that violence. St. *Paul* made Religion his recreation, *Rom.* 7. 22. *I delight in the Law of God after the inward man.* In the Greek, συνήδομαι, *I take pleaſure*; not only Heaven it ſelf is delightful, but the way thither. What raviſhing delight hath a gracious ſoul in prayer! *Iſa.* 56. 7. *I will make them joyful in the houſe of prayer.* What delight in holy contemplation! A Chriſtian hath ſuch illapſes of the Spirit, and meets with ſuch transfigurations of ſoul, that he thinks himſelf half in Heaven. Serving of God is like gathering of Spices, or Flowers, wherein there is ſome 5. Motive.

ſome labour, but the labour is recompenſed with delight. The way of ſin hath bitterneſs in it. The Bears while they lick the honey, are ſtung with the Bees. So while men are following their luſts, they have checks of conſcience, which are a foretaſt of Hell. Better want the honey; than have this ſting. But the violence for Heaven is ſpiced with ſuch joy, that it is not labour, but pleaſure.

6. Motive. V. This violence and activity of Spirit in Religion, puts a luſtre upon a Chriſtian. The more excellent any thing is, the more active. The Sun is a glorious creature, as a Gyant *it runs its Race*, *Pſal.* 19. 5. Fire, the nobleſt element, ſparkles vigorouſly. The Angels are deſcribed with wings, *Iſa.* 6. 2. which is an emblem of their ſwift obedience. The more violent we are in Religion, the more Angelical we are.

7. Motive. 7. How violent was Chriſt about our ſalvation! He was in an Agony; he *continued all night in prayer*, *Luke* 6. 12. He wept, he faſted, he dyed a violent death; he roſe violently out of the grave. Was Chriſt ſo violent for our ſalvation, and doth it not become us to be

be violent, who are ſo nearly concerned in it? Chriſt's violence was not only ſatisfactory, but exemplary. It was not only to appeaſe God, but to teach us. Chriſt was violent in dying, to teach us to be violent in believing.

8. This holy violence brings Reſt*; motion tends to reſt, *Heb.* 4. 9. *There remaineth a reſt for the people of God.* Indeed, there is a motion which doth not tend to reſt: they who are violent in a way of ſin, ſhall never have reſt, *Revel.* 4. 8. *They reſt not day and night.* Such as are graceleſs, ſhall be reſtleſs. But the violence a Chriſtian takes, leads to reſt. As the weary Traveller ſits down at night and reſts him, *Pſal.* 116. 7. *Return to thy reſt, O my ſoul.* Holy violence is like the flying of *Noah*'s Dove to the Ark, where it found reſt. 8. Motive. * *Omnis Motus tendit ad quietem.*

9. If we uſe what violence we are able, God will help us, *Phil* 2. 12.. *It is God who worketh in you both to will and to do.* The Spirit helps us in prayer, and ſo proportionably in all other duties of Religion, *Rom.* 8. 26. The Promiſe encourageth, and the Spirit enableth. In all earthly Races a man runs in his own ſtrength; but in the Race to Heaven 9. Motive.

we

we have the Spirit of God helping us; he not only gives us the Crown, when we have done running; but he gives us legs to run; he gives exciting and assisting grace; the Spirit of God helping, makes our work easie. If another helps to carry a burden, it is less difficult. If the Loadstone draw the Iron, it is not hard for the Iron to move. If the Spirit of God, as a divine Loadstone, draw and move the heart in obedience; now the work goes on with more facility.

10. Motive. 10. This blessed violence in Religion, would be preventive of much sin. While men are idle in the Vineyard, they are a prey to every temptation. We do not sow our seed in fallow ground; but Satan doth sow most of his seed of temptation in hearts that lye fallow. When he sees persons unimployed, he will find them work to do; he will stir them up to one sin or other; *Matth.* 13. 25. *While men slept, the enemy sowed tares.* When Satan finds men in a drowsie condition, their sleeping time is his tempting time; but by holy violence we prevent the Devil's design; we are so busied about salvation, that we have no leisure to listen to a temptation

tion. St. *Hierom* gave his friend this advice, to be alwaies well employed, that when Satan came with a temptation he might find him working in the Vineyard. When the bird is flying it is safe, when it sits still on the bough, then it is in danger of being shot. When a Christian sits still, and is unactive, now the Devil shoots him with his *fiery darts*.

11. The folly of such as are violent for the world, but not for the Kingdom above. Alas, how insipid are all these things that we lay out our sweat and violence upon, they will not make us happy. King *Solomon* did as it were put all the creatures into a limbeck, and still out the quintessence of them, and *behold all was vanity*, *Eccles.* 2, 8. 11. Motive.

1. These earthly things that we so toil for, are *uncertain*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 17. 'Tis uncertain whether we shall get them. All that are Suitors to a Virgin do not speed. All that come to a Lottery have not a prize.

2. They are *unsatisfactory*. Could men heap up Silver as dust; had they as much as the Devil promised Christ, *All the Kingdoms of the world, and the glory*

glory of them; yet they can no more fill the heart, than a drop of water can fill the ciſtern, *Eccleſ.* 5. 16. *What profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?*

3. They are *tranſient*; death feeds at the root. All worldly poſſeſſions are like a Caſtle of Snow in the Sun: or like a poſie of flowers which withers while we are ſmelling to it. O what folly is it to put forth all ones violence for the world, which is but *for a ſeaſon*, and not for Chriſt and grace. As if a condemned man ſhould be earneſt to get his dinner, but never mind getting his pardon.

12. Motive. * μὴ τὴν οἰκίαν ἁρπάσῃς, ἀλλὰ τὸν μισθὸν Chryſoſt.

12. The next motive is in the text; this violence is for a Kingdom *. The Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth violence. And what will we be violent for, if not for a Kingdom; Men will wade to a Kingdom through blood: This is a Kingdom worth ſtriving for. *Cyprus* is an Iſland ſo exceeding fertile and pleaſant, that it was antiently called *Macaria*, which ſignifies *Bleſſed*. This title of *Bleſſed* may more fitly be given to the heavenly Kingdom. If the Mountains were Gold; if every Sand of the Sea were a Diamond; if the whole Globe

Globe were a shining Coryfoute; it were infinitely beneath the glory of this Kingdom.

1. The immunities of the heavenly Kingdom are great.

1. There shall be a freedom from *sin*; here sin keeps house with us; it is as natural to us to sin, as to breath. The soul that is most refined, and clarified by grace, is not without some dregs of corruption. St. *Paul* cryed out of a *Body of sin*. He who is inoculated into Christ hath still a taste and relish of the wild Olive. But when we ascend to the heavenly Kingdom, this mantle of sin shall drop off. That Kingdom is so pure, that it will not mix with any corruption, *Rev.* 21. 27. A sinful thought shall not creep in there. There is beauty, which is not stained with lust, and honour which is not swelled with pride.

2. In that blessed Kingdom there shall be freedom from the assaults of the *Red Dragon*. 'Tis said to have Satan daily soliciting us by his temptations, and labouring to trappan us into sin. Temptation is the Devil's Powder-plot, to blow up the fort-royal of our graces;

but this is the blessed freedom of the heavenly Kingdom, it is not capable of temptation. The *old Serpent* is cast out of Paradise.

3. In that blessed Kingdom, there shall be freedom from divisions. In this world, God's *own Tribes* go to warr. *Ephraim* envies *Judah*, and *Judah* vexeth *Ephraim*. The Souldiers Spear pierced Christ's side; but the divisions of Saints pierce his heart. Christ prayed that all his people might be one, as he and his Father are one, *Joh.* 17. 21. But how do Christians by their discords and animosities go about what in them lies to frustrate Christs Prayer. But in the Kingdom of Heaven there is *perfect love*, which, as it casts out *fear*, so *strife*. Those Christians that could not live quietly together *here*, in that Kingdom shall be united. There *Calvin* and *Luther* are agreed. In that coelestial Kingdom there shall be no vilifying or slandering one another, or raking into those sores which Christ died to heal. Christians that could not pray together, shall sing together in that glorious quire: there shall not be one jarring string in the Saints musick.

4. In

4. In that heavenly Kingdom there shall be freedom from all molestations. Our lives now are interlined with troubles, *Psal.* 31. 10. *My life is spent with grief, and my years with sighing.* * There are many things to occasion disquiet: Sometimes poverty afflicts; sometimes sickness tortures; sometimes unkindness of friends breaks the heart. Our lives, like the *Irish Seas*, are full of tempests; but in the Kingdom of Heaven is nothing to administer grief; there all is serene and calm; nothing within to humble, or without to molest.

* ἀνιαρὸς ὁ βίος ἀνὴρ σύμφορα. Euripid.

2. The Royalties and excellencies of that Kingdom are great. We may say of Heaven, as it was said of *Laish*, *Judg.* 18. 9, 10. *We have seen the Land, and behold it is very good; a place where there is no want of any thing.* 2

The heavenly Kingdom abounds with Riches, *Rev.* 21. 21. *The Twelve Gates were twelve Pearls.* Earthly Kingdoms are fain to traffique abroad for Gold and Spices: In the Kingdom of God are all Rarities to be had, all commodities of its *own growth*; therefore figured by the *Tree of life*, bearing several sorts

of fruit, Rev. 22. 2. How rich is that place where the blessed Deity shines forth in its immense glory infinitely beyond the comprehension of Angels.

2. The delights of the heavenly Kingdom are unmixed. The comforts here below are checkered. Honour may be stained with disgrace; joy interlarded with sorrow. Our stars are mixed with clouds; but the delicacies of Heaven are *pure* as well as *pleasant*. There is honey that hath not one drop of gall; The Crystal spring of joy hath no settling of sorrow at bottom. The Rose in that Paradise is without prickles; the Sun in that horizon is without eclipse.

3. This Kingdom above is *durable*;

Suppose earthly Kingdoms to be more glorious than they are, their foundations of gold, their walls of pearl, their windows of Saphire, yet they are corruptible, *Hos.* 1. 4. *I will cause the Kingdom to cease.* *Troy* and *Athens* now lye buried in their own ruines. But the Kingdom of Glory, as it is made *without hands*; so *without end*. It is *the everlasting*

lasting Kingdom, 2 Pet. 1. 11. Now me-thinks, if ever we will use violence, it should be for this Kingdom; this Kingdom will make amends for all our labour and pains. *Cæsar* marching with his Army towards *Rome*, and hearing that all the people were fled from it, said, they that will not fight for this City, what City will they fight for? So if we will not put forth violence for this Kingdom of Heaven, what will we be violent for? I say to all, as the children of *Dan* in another sense *Judges* 18. 9. *We have seen the Land, and behold it is very good, and are ye still? Be not slothfull to go, and to enter to possess the Land.*

Ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ ἤκουσε τραῦμα λαβεῖν, ἔφη, καὶ τὴν πόλιν ἀπολωλέναι. Chrysost. Serm. in Antropium.

ὁ γοῦν Καῖσαρ ἔλεγε τὰ χρήματα μὴ τὴν πόλιν ἀπολωλέναι.

Christe Christi ex, militiam emitte, et angelos, pleniasque tuam scilicet gloriæ tractum, spiritus. Tapp.

13. The more violence we have used for Heaven, the sweeter Heaven will be when we come there. As when a man hath been a grafting Trees, or setting Flowers in his garden, it is pleasant to review and look over his labours: So in Heaven, when we shall remember

13. Motive.

our former zeal and activity for the Kingdom; it will inculcate Heaven, and add to the joy of it. For a Christian to think, such a day I spent in examining my heart, such a day I was weeping for sin; when others were at their sport, I was at my prayers; and now, have I lost any thing by this violence? My tears are wiped away, and the wine of Paradise cheers my heart. I now enjoy him *whom my soul loves*; I now have the Crown and white Robe I so longed for. O how pleasant will it be to think, this is the Heaven my Saviour bled for, and I swet for.

14. Motive. 14. The more violence we put forth in Religion, the greater measure of glory we shall have. That there are degrees of glory in Heaven, seems to me beyond dispute.

1. There are degrees of torment in Hell *; therefore by the Rule of contraries degrees of glory in Heaven.

* Mat. 23. 14.

2. The Scripture speaks of a *Prophet's Reward*, *Mat.* 10. 41. which is a degree above others.

3. The Saints are said to shine as *Stars*, *Dan.* 12. Now one Star differeth from another in glory. So that there

are

are gradations of happiness; and of this judgement is *Calvin*; as also many of the antient Fathers. Consider then seriously; the more violent we are for Heaven, and the more work we do for God, the greater will be our reward. The hotter our zeal, the brighter our Crown. Could we hear the blessed souls departed speaking to us from Heaven, sure thus they would say, were we to leave Heaven a while, and to dwell on the earth again, we would do God a thousand times more service than ever we have done; we would pray with more life, act with more zeal; for now we see, the more hath been our labour, the more astonishing is our joy, and the more flourishing our Crown.

15. Upon our violence for the Kingdom, God hath promised mercy, *Mat. 7. 7. Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you.* 15. Motive

1. *Ask.*] Ask with importunity. A faint asking begs a denial *. King *Ahasuerus* stood with his golden Scepter, and said to Queen *Esther*, *Ask and it shall be given to half of the Kingdom.* But God saith more, Ask and he will give the

* *Dic si-gilli regni* &c.

whole Kingdom, *Luke* 12. 32. It is observable, the door of the tabernacle was not of beats, but had a thin covering, a *vail*, that they might easily enter into it: So the door of Heaven is through Christ's blood made easie, that our prayers put up in fervency may enter. Upon our asking, God hath promised to give his Spirit, *Luke* 11. 13. And if he gives his Spirit, he will give the Kingdom; the Spirit first anoints, 1 *John* 2. 27. and after its anointing Oyl comes the Crown.

2. *Seek and ye shall find.*] But, is it not said, *Many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able?* *Luke* 13. 24. I answer, that is, because they did seek in a wrong manner.

1. They did seek *ignorantly*, setting up an Altar *to an unknown god*. It is ill seeking Pearls in the dark. Ignorant people seek Heaven by their good meanings; they seek in the dark, and no wonder they miss of salvation.

2. They did seek *proudly*. They sought Heaven by their own merits; whereas we are to seek the Kingdom in Christ's *righteousness* and in his *name*.

3. They did seek *lazily*. As the Spouse sought

sought Christ *on her bed*, and found him not, *Cant.* 3. 1. So many seek Christ in a supine manner; they *seek*, but they do not *strive*.

4. They did seek *hypocritically*; they would have Heaven and their lusts too. Like that Protestant Prince, *Camdens* speaks of, who set up one Altar in the same Church to the true God, and another to the Idol. But let not such seekers ever think to find happiness; let not them think to lye in *Dalila's* lap, and go to *Abraham's* bosom when they die.

5. They did seek *inconstantly*. Because mercy did not come presently, they gave over seeking.

But else if we seek the Kingdom of Heaven cordially, God hath pawned his Truth in a promise, we shall find, *Jer.* 29. 13. *Then shall ye find me, when you search for me with all your heart.*

3. *Knock, and it shall be opened.* Knocking implies *violence*. But we must do as *Peter*, *Acts* 12. 16. *He continued knocking*. We must continue knocking by prayer, and Heaven-gate shall be opened. How may this be as Oyl to the wheels? how may it excite holy violence, when we have so gracious a promise

mise of mercy upon our earnest seeking of it.

16. Motive. 16. This holy violence will not hinder men in their secular employments. Violence for the Kingdom, and diligence in a calling, are not inconsistent. Christians, you may work for Heaven, yet work in a trade. God hath given you a body and a soul, and he hath allotted you time to provide for both: he hath given you a *body*, therefore be diligent in your calling; he hath given you a *soul*, therefore be violent for Heaven. These two may well stand together, providing for a family, and praying in in a family. He that doth not exercise himself in some honest employment, is guilty of the breach of that Commandment, *Six dayes shalt thou labour*. God never sealed warrants for idleness *. The sluggard shall be indicted at the day of judgement for letting his *field be over-run with thorns* †. They are hypocrites who talk of living by faith, but refuse to live in a Calling. Only remember, that the pains you tak in Religion must exceed the other, *Matt. 6. 33. Seek ye first the*

* *Incumbit omnibus ut laborent.* Quisquis. *vid.* Ambros. *lib. 6. Hexam. cap. 4.* Virgilium *lib. 4. Aeneid.* Horatium *Sat. 1.* Plinium, *lib. 11. c. 30. &c.*

† Prov. 24. 30.

the Kingdom of God. First, in order of *time*, before all things; and first in order of *affection*, above all things. Your soul is the nobler part, therefore that must be chiefly looked after. In your calling shew diligence; in Religion violence.

But some may say, We are so incumbred in the world, that all time for Religion is swallowed up; we cannot get leave from our calling to read or pray?

Resp. If your trade be such that you cannot allow your selves time for your souls, then your trade is unlawful. There are two things make a trade unlawful.

1. When persons deal in such commodities as they know cannot be used without sin. Selling of *black spots*, or idolatrous Pictures and Crucifixes.

2. When their trade doth so involve them in worldly business, that they cannot mind eternity, or make out one sally to the Throne of Grace. They are so much in the shop, that they cannot be in the closet. If there be such a trade to be found, doubtless it is unlawful; but let not men lay it upon their trade, but upon themselves; their trade would

give

give them leave to serve God, but their covetousness will not give them leave. O how many put a fallacy upon their own souls, and cheat themselves into Hell.

17. Motive. 17. There is but a short space of time granted us, therefore work the harder for Heaven before it be too late. Indeed we are apt to dream of a long life, as if we were not *sojourners*, but *natives*, and were to stay here alwaies. The blossom of childhood hopes to come to the budding of youth; and the bud of youth hopes to come to the flower of age; and the flower of age hopes to come to old age; and old age hopes to renew its strength as the Eagle *: But if we measure life by a pair of Scripture-compasses, it is very short: it is compared to a *flying shadow*, *Job.* 8. 17. to an *hand-breadth*, *Psal.* 39. 5. as if there were but a span between the cradle and the grave, —*parum abest à nihilo*— Is the time of life so short, and may be shorter than we are aware? what needs there zealously to improve it before it be slipp'd away? if time runs, let us *run*, 1 *Cor.* 9. 24. He that hath a great business in hand, and the

* Psal. 49. 11.

time allotted for doing it is but short, had not need loſe any of that time. A Traveller that hath many miles to ride, and the night ready to approach, had need ſpur on the harder, that the night do not overtake him: So we have a long journy, and the night of death is drawing on, how ſhould we uſe ſpurs to our ſluggiſh hearts, that we may go on more ſwiftly!

18. A man's perſonal day of grace may be ſhort. There is a time while the Scepter of grace is held forth, 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. *Now is the accepted time.* The Lord hath prefixed a time wherein the means of Grace ſhall work or not work. If a perſon come not in by ſuch a time, God may ſay, *Never fruit grow on thee more.* A ſign this day of grace is paſt, when conſcience hath done ſpeaking, and God's Spirit hath done ſtriving. Whether this day may be longer or ſhorter, we cannot tell; but becauſe it may ſo ſoon expire, 'tis wiſdom to take the preſent opportunity, and uſe all violence for Heaven. The day of grace haſtens away: no man can (like *Joſhua*) bid this *Sun ſtand ſtill*; and if this critical day be once paſt, it cannot be recalled. The

18. Motive.

day

day of grace being loſt, the next is a *day of wrath*. *Hieruſalem* had a day, but ſhe loſt it, *Luke* 19. 44. *If thou hadſt known, even thou, in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.* After the expiration of the day of grace, no means or mercies ſhall prove effectual: Now *they are hid from thine eyes.* Which is like the ringing a doleful knell over a dying perſon; therefore put forth all violence for Heaven, and do it in this, τὸ νῦν, before it be too late, and the decree be gone forth.

19 Motive

19. If you neglect the offering violence now, there will be no help for you after death. When men ſhall open their eyes in another world, and ſee into what a damned condition they have ſinned themſelves, O now what would they not do, what violence would they not uſe, if there were a poſſibility they might be ſaved! When once the door of mercy is ſhut, if God would make new terms far harder than before, they would readily ſeal to them. If God ſhould ſay to the ſinner after death, Wouldſt thou be content to return to the earth, and live there under the harrow

harrow of persecution a thousand years for my sake? Yes Lord, I will subscribe to this, and endure the world's fury, may I have but thy favour at last. But, wilt thou be content to serve an Apprentiship in Hell a thousand years, where thou shalt feel the worm gnawing, and the fire burning? Yes Lord, even in Hell I submit to be; so that after a thousand years I may have a release, and that *bitter cup* may pass away from me. But, wilt thou for every lye thou hast told, endure the rack? wilt thou for every Oath that thou hast sworn, fill a *bottle of tears*? wilt thou for every sin thou hast committed, lye ten thousand years in sackcloth and ashes? Yes Lord, all this and more if thou requirest, I will subscribe to; I am content now to use any violence, if I may but at last be admitted into thy Kingdom. No, will God say, there shall be no such condition proposed to thee, no possibility of favour, but thou shalt lye for ever among the damned, and *who is able to dwell with everlasting burnings*? Oh therefore be wise in time, now while God's terms are more easie, embrace Christ, and Heaven, for after death

death there will be nothing to be done for your souls. The fuuer and the furnace shall never be parted.

20. Motive. 20. How without all Apology will you be left, if you neglect this violence for heaven! Me-thinks I hear God thus expostulating the case with sinners at the last day. Why did you not take pains for Heaven? hath not there been *a Prophet among you?* Did not my Ministers *lift up their voice like a Trumpet?* did not they warn you? did not they perswade you to use this violence, telling you that your salvation depended upon it? but the most melting Rhetorick of the Gospel would not move you. Did not I give you time to look after your souls? *Rev.* 2. 21. *I gave her space to repent.* Did not you promise in your vow in baptism, that you would take Heaven by force? *Fighting under my banner against world, flesh, and Devil?* Why then did you not use violence for the Kingdom? It must be either sloth or obstinacy. You could be violent for other things, for the world, for your lusts, but not for the Kingdom of Heaven. What can you say for your selves, why the sentence of damnation should not

Mansuetudinis suam testatur, mulieris contumaciam accusat. Paræus.

not pass? O how will men be confounded and left speechless at such a time, and God's Justice shall be cleared in their condemnation! *Psal.* 51. 4. *That thou maiest be clear when thou judgest.* Though the Sinner shall drink a Sea of wrath, yet not one drop of injustice.

21. What a vexation it will be at the last to lose the Kingdom of Glory for want of a little violence. When one shall think with himself, I did something in Religion, but I was not violent enough; I prayed, but I should have brought fire to the sacrifice. I heard the word, but I should have received the truth in love; I humbled my self with fasting, but I should with humiliation have joyned reformation. I gave Christ's poor good words; I did *bid them be warmed*, but I should have clothed and fed them, and for want of a little more violence I have lost the Kingdom. The Prophet bade the King of *Israel* smite upon the ground, 2 *King.* 13. 18. And he *smote thrice, and staid, and the man of God was wroth, and said, thou shouldest have smitten five or six times, then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou* 21. Motive.

desire consumed thee. So a man doth some thing in Religion, he smites, thrives, and then stands whistling, had he but put forth a little more violence for Heaven he had been saved. What a mischief is this but to half do ones work, and by shooting short to lose the Kingdom! O how will this cut a man to the heart when he is in Hell, to think, had I but gone a little further it had been better with me than it is now; had not been thus tormented in the flame.

22. Motive. 22. The examples of the Saints of old, who have taken Heaven by force. *David* broke his heart for meditation, *Psal.* 119. 148. His violence for Heaven was boiled away to zeal, *Psal.* 119. 139. *My zeal hath consumed me.* And St. *Paul did reach forth unto those things which were before**. The Greek word signifies to stretch out the neck; a metaphor taken from Racers, that strain every limb, and reach forward to lay hold upon the prize. We read of *Anna* a Prophetess, *Luke* 2. 37. *She departed not from the Temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.* How industrious was *Calvin* in the Lords Vineyard. When his friends persuaded him

* ἐπεκτεινόμενος.

him for his health sake) to remit a little of his labours, saith he: *Would ye have me, Lord, feed my swine when they come?* Luther spent three hours a day in prayer. It is said of holy *Bradford*, preaching, reading and prayer was his whole use. I rejoice (said Bishop *Jewel*) that my body is exhausted in the labours of my holy calling. How violent were the blessed Martyrs! they wore their fetters as ornaments; they snatched up torments as Crowns, and embraced the flames as chearfully as *Elijah* did the fiery Chariot that came to fetch him to Heaven. Let racks, fires, pulies, and all manner of torments come, so I may win Christ, said *Ignatius*. These pious souls *resisted unto blood*. How should this provoke our zeal! write after these fair copies!

Quid valitis ut domi-nus veniens otiosum me inveniat, &c. Bern in vita Calv.

23. If the Saints with all their violence have much ado to get to Heaven, how shall they come there who use no violence, 1 *Pet.* 4. 18. *If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* If they that strive as in an Agony can hardly get in at the strait gate, what shall become of them that never strive at all! If Saint *Paul*

23. Motive.

that keep under his body, by prayer, watching, fasting, 1 Cor. 9. 27. how shall they be saved, that wholly let loose the reins to the flesh, and bathe themselves in the luscious streams of carnal pleasure.

14. This sweating for Heaven is not to endure long, 1 Pet. 5. 10. *After ye have suffered a while.* So after ye have offered violence a while, there shall be an end put to it. Your labour shall expire with your life. It is but a while and you shall have done weeping, wrastling, praying; it is but a while and the Race will be over, and you shall receive *the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls*, 1 Pet. 1. 9. It is but a while and you shall have done your weary marches, you shall put off your Armour, and put on white Robes.

How should this excite a spirit of holy violence! It is but a few months or daies and you shall reap the sweet fruit of your obedience. The winter will be past, and the spring flowers of joy shall appear. Doctor *Taylor* comforted himself when he was going to the stake, *I have but two stiles to go over, and I shall be*

14. Motive.

* Or, Now.

* Heatr.

be at my Father's house. Christians, you have but a little way to go, a little more violence, a few more mortified, a few more Sabbaths kept, and then your hopes shall be crowned with the beatifical sight of God. When the vapour is blown away, then we may see the Sun clearly; so when this short vapour of life is blown away, then we shall behold Christ the Sun of Righteousness in all his glory, 1 Joh. 3. 2. *We shall see him as he is.*

25. Motive. 25. If you are not violent for Heaven, you do, as it were, deny your own prayers. You pray that God's will may be done by you on earth, as it *is done in Heaven*; but how is God's will done in heaven? we see the Angels swift in doing the will of God, like the stars about the equinoctial, that are moved many millions of miles in an hour. The heavens are described with wings, to note how velocious and winged they are in their obedience, Isa. 6. 2. Now if you are not violent in your spiritual motions, you live in a contradiction to your own prayers. You are far from being as Angels, you creep as Snails in the way to Heaven.

16. Motive. 16. Thirdly, and thirdly violence would make Christians willing to die. What is it makes men so loth to die? they are as it were loth to go out of an house, why so? because their conscience accuseth them that they have taken little or no pains for Heaven: they have been sleeping, when they should have been working, and now death looks grimly upon them, they are afraid death will carry them prisoners to Hell. Whereas the Christian that hath been active in Religion, and hath spent his time in the service of God, he can look death in the face with confidence. He who hath been violent for Heaven in his life, need not fear a violent death. Death shall do him no hurt, it shall not be a [illegible] but a welcome, it shall purge out sin, and perfect [illegible] What made St. Paul [illegible] Surely the reason was, he had been a man of violence, he did spend himself for Christ, and [illegible] And now he knew there was a Crown laid up for him, [illegible] he did desire that he might have a quiet

quiet ease death. If any thing make our pillow easie at death, and you go out of the world quietly, it will be this holy violence that we have put forth in the business of Religion.

17. Motive.

7. Lastly, All that hath been said, will either stir still, or keep you sweet for something else than Heaven, *know*, there is a time shortly coming when you will wish you had used this violence. When sickness seizeth on you, and your disease begins to grow violent, and you think Gods Sergeant is at the door, then what wishes will you make, O that I had been more violent for Heaven! O that I had been praying when I was dancing and making merry! O that I had had a bible in my hand, when I had a pair of Cards! how happy then might I have been! but alas, my case is miserable! what shall I do! I am so sick, that I cannot live, and so sinful, that I dare not die. O that God would respite me a little longer, that he would put a few years more in my lease, that a little space might be granted me to recover my lost hours! As one said on her death-bed, *Call time again*; but time will not be called again. At the hour of

of death sinners will awake out of their lethargy, and fall into a phrensie of horrour and despair; and shall not all these Arguments prevail with men to be violent for the Kingdom? what an hardned piece is a sinner's heart! We read that at Christ's passion, the *Rocks rent*, Mat. 27. 51. But nothing will move a sinner; The Rocks will sooner rend than his heart. If all that I have said will not prevail, it is a sign ruine is towards, 1 Sam. 2. 25. *They hearkned not to the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them.*

Caution. Yet this Caution I must necessarily insert; though we shall not obtain the Kingdom *without violence*, yet not *for* our violence. When we have done all, look up to Christ and free grace. *Bellarmine saith, we merit Heaven ex condigno.* No, though we are saved in the use of means, yet by *grace*, Ephes. 2. 5. *By grace ye are saved.* Heaven is a donative, Luke 12. 32. *It is my Father's good pleasure to give you a Kingdom.* Why may one say, I have used violence for it, I have wrought for the Kingdom; I, but it is a gift, that free grace bestows. We must look up to Christ for acceptance;

tance: not our sweat, but his blood saves; our labouring qualifies us for Heaven, but Christ's dying purchased Heaven. Alas, what is all that we can do in comparison of glory? what is the shedding of a tear to a Crown? therefore we must renounce all in point of Justification, and let Christ and free grace carry away the glory of our salvation. God must help us in our working. *Phil.* 2. 13. *It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do.* How then can we merit by our working, when it is God that helps us in our working?

I shall in the next place lay down some Rules or Directions how to get this blessed violence. 3. use, Direction.

I. Take heed of those things which will hinder this violence for Heaven. I. *Remove.*

1. Take heed of Unbelief, Unbelief is a great *remora*, as it is discouraging. When a Christian is working for Heaven, unbelief whispers thus, To what purpose is all this pains? I had as good sit still. I may pray, and not be heard; I may work, and have no reward; I may come near Heaven, yet miss it. *Jer.* 8. 12. I. *And*

And they said, There is no hope. Unbelief dissolves hope; and if you cut this sinew of Religion, all violence for Heaven ceaseth. Unbelief raiseth a cloud of despondency in the heart. Alas, you will never be able to go through the work of Religion; so many precepts to obey, so many temptations to resist, so many afflictions to bear, that you will *succumbere oneri*, fall under the burden; you will tire in your march to Heaven. Unbelief raiseth jealousy thoughts of God, it representeth him as an *austerus Magister*, and that if we fail in never so little a *punctilio*, he will take the extremity of the law upon us. This discourageth the soul in the use of means. Unbelief doth as *Sanballat* and *Tobiah* did to the Jews, *Neh.* 6. 9. *They made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakned from the work.* Oh take heed of unbelief, it destroys this holy violence. We read of *Jordan's* stream being withered, 2 *King.* 2. 14. Unbelief withers the arm of the soul, that it cannot stretch it self forth to any spiritual action. Unbelief opens the Devil the greatest kindness, it makes way for his temptations to enter, which do so inchant

merciful and bewitcheth, that we cannot work. Beware of this sin, believe the Promises; God is good to all that *seek him*, Lam. 3. 25. Do but seek him with importunity, and he will open both his heart and Heaven to thee.

2. Take heed of puzling your thoughts about Election. A Christian may think thus, what should I take pains? perhaps I am not elected, and then all my endeavours is to no purpose. Thus many are taken off from the use of means, and the business of Religion is at a stand. Whereas no man can justly say, he is not elected. It is true, some of Gods children have said to in temptation, but as Peter in a manner also said he knew not what; so these in a temptation but no man can say on just grounds he is not elected, unless he can prove that he hath sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost. For any one to affirm Election is a sin, for that which keeps him to sin, must needs be sinful; but this opinion keeps him in sin, it discourageth him from the use of means, and cuts the sinews of all endeavours; do not therefore perplex your thoughts about Election, this Book is *sealed*, and

no

no Angel can unclasp it. The Rule Christians are to go by, is God's Revealed Will, not his Secret. God's revealed will is, that we should pray and repent; by this we make our calling sure; and by making our calling sure we make our election sure. If [illegible] the beds of spices grow, and flourish, I know the Sun hath been there. And if I find the fruits of obedience in my heart, I may conclude, Gods electing love hath shined upon me. *Thessalonians. God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification.*

Take heed of too much violence after the world; the world cools good affections. The earth puts out the fire. The mortified ear hears Trumpet sounds a retreat, and calls men off from their pursuit after Heaven. The world hindered the young man from following Christ, *it went away sorrowful*: whereupon it is said our Saviour, *How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God?* Luke 18. 24. Demas his Religion lay buried in the earth, 2 Tim. 4. 10. *Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.* It was a saying of Plato's, When a bad

entred

entred into orders, I had some good hope of my salvation; when I became a Cardinal, I doubted of it; but since I came to be Pope, I do even despair of it. *Jonathan* pursued the victory till he came at the hony-comb, and then he stood still, *1 Sam.* 14. 27. Many are valent for the Kingdom of God, till gain or preferment offers it self; when they meet with this hony, then they stand still. The world blinds mens eyes that they do not see the way; and fetters their feet that they do not run in the way of God's Commandments. *Mithridates* King of *Pontus* being worsted by the *Romans*, and fearing he should not escape them, caused a great deal of silver and gold to be scattered in the wayes, which while the *Roman* souldiers were busie in gathering, he got away from them. The like stratagem Satan useth, knowing what tempting things Riches are, he throws them in mens way, that while they are eager in gathering these, he may hinder them in their pursuit of happiness. I have observed some who did once *Jehu*-like, drive on furiously in the cause of Religion, when the world hath come in

upon

upon them; their Chariot wheels have been pulled off, and they have *drive on heavily*. Were a man to climb up a steepy Rock, and had weights tied to his legs, they would hinder his ascent. Mens golden weights hinder them in climbing up this steepy Rock which leads to salvation. The world is a subtle charm to lay men asleep, and when they are asleep, they are not fit to work. A thing cannot be carried violently to two extreams at once. The ship cannot go full sail to the East and West at the same time. So a man cannot be violent for Heaven and Earth at once: he may have Christ and the world; but cannot love Christ and the world, 1 Joh. 2. 15. He that is all fire for the world will be all ice for Heaven. Take heed of engaging your affections too far in these secular things. Use the world as your servant, but do not follow it as your Master.

* *Vesus pectus, sua anima.*

4. Take heed of indulging any lust. Sin lived in will spoil all violence for Heaven. Sin infeebles, as like the cutting *Samson's* hair, and then the strength departs. Sin is *aegritudo animi*, the soul's sickness. Sickness takes a man off his

leg,

legs, and doth so disspirit him, that he is unfit for any violent exercise. A sick man cannot run a Race. Sin lived in, takes a man quite off from duty, or makes him dead in it. The more lively the heart is in sin, the more dead it is in prayer. How can he be earnest with God for mercy, whose heart accuseth him of secret sin. Guilt breeds fear; and that which strengthens fear, weakens violence. *Adam* having sinned was afraid, and hid himself, *Gen.* 3. 10. When *Adam* had lost his innocence, he lost his violence. Therefore lay the Axe to the root, let sin be beaten down; not only abstain from sin in the act, but let the love of sin be mortified; and let every sin be put to the sword. Many will leave all their sins but one, save one sin, and lose one soul. One sin is a fetter; a man may lose the Race as well by having one fetter on his leg, as if he had more. I have read of a great Monarch *, that flying from his enemy, he threw away the Crown of gold on his head, that he might run the faster: So that sin which thou didst wear as a Crown of gold, throw it away that thou mayst the faster run to the heavenly Kingdom. If

* Darius.

5. If you would be violent for Heaven, take heed of despondency of spirit. Be *serious*, but *chearful*. He whose spirit is pressed down with sadness, is unfit to go about his work. An unchearful heart is unfit to pray, or praise God. When the strings of a Lute are wet, it will not put forth any sweet harmony. Such as go drooping under fears and discouragements, cannot be violent in Religion. When a souldier faints in the field, he soon lets fall his sword. *David* chides himself out of his melancholy, *Psal.* 43. 5. *Why art thou cast down O my soul? Why art thou disquieted within me? hope yet in God.* A sad heart makes a dull action. We use the Drum and Trumpet in Battel, that the noise of the Trumpet may excite and quicken the souldiers spirits, and make them fight more vigorously. Chearfulness is like musick in battel, it excites a Christian's spirits, and makes him vegete and lively in duty. What is done with cherfulness, is done with delight, and the soul flies most swiftly to Heaven upon the wing of delight.

6. If you would be violent for Heaven, take heed of a supine lazy temper. A

doubtfull

slothful Christian is like a fearful souldier, that hath a good mind to the plunder, but is loth to storm the Castle: So he would fain have Heaven, but is loth to take it by storm. —*enerves animos odisse virtus solet* *——Sloth is the soul's sleep. Many instead of wo king out of salvation, sleep away salvation. Such as will not labour, must be put at last to beg; they must beg as *Dives*, for one drop of water. An idle man (saith *Solomon*) *puts his hand in his bosom*, *Prov.* 19. 24. He should have his hand to the plough, and he puts it in his bosom. God never made Heaven an hive for droners. Sloth is a disease apt to grow upon men; shake it off. A ship that is a slug, is a prey to the Pirate. A slugish soul is a prey to Satan. When the Crocodile sleeps with his mouth open, the Indian Rat gets into his belly, and eats his entrails. While men are asleep in sloth, the Devil enters and devours them.

* Valer. Max.

7. Take heed of consulting with flesh and blood. As good consult with the Devil as the flesh. The flesh is a bosom-traitor. An enemy within the walls is worst. The flesh cries out, there is a

Lion in the way. The flesh will bid thee *spare thy self*, as *Peter* did Christ: O be not so violent for Heaven, *spare thy self.* The flesh saith as *Judas*, *What needs all this waste?* So, what needs all this praying and wrestling? why dost thou waste thy strength? what needs all this waste? The flesh cries out for ease; it is loth to put its neck under Christ's yoak. The flesh is for *pleasure*; it had rather be gaming, than running the heavenly Race. There is a description of fleshly pleasures, *Amos* 6. 4, 5, 6. *That lie upon beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their Couches, that chaunt to the sound of the Viol; that drink Wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointments.* These are the delights of the flesh. Such an one was he spoken of in *Beard*'s Theatre, that did strive to please all his five senses at once. He did bespeak a room richly hung with fair Pictures; he had the most delicious musick: he had all the choise Aromaticks and Perfumes; he had all the Candies and curious Preserves of the Confectioner; he was lodged in the bed with a beautiful Curtisan: Thus did he indulge the flesh, and swore that he would

would ſpend all his eſtate to live one week like a God, though he were ſure to be damned in Hell the next day. O take heed of holding intelligence with the fleſh! The fleſh is a bad Counſellor. St. *Paul* would *not confer with fleſh and blood*, *Gal.* 1. 16. The fleſh is a ſworn enemy to this holy violence, *Rom* 8. 13. *If ye live after the fleſh, ye ſhall die.* You have taken an oath in Baptiſme to renounce the fleſh.

Take heed of liſtning to the voice of ſuch carnal friends as would call you off from this bleſſed violence. Fire when in Snow, will ſoon loſe its heat, and by degrees go out. Among bad company you will ſoon loſe your heat for Religion. The company of the wicked will ſooner cool you, than your company will heat them. Vinegar will ſooner ſowre the Wine, than the Wine will ſweeten the Vinegar. How often do carnal friends the ſame to our ſouls, as infected perſons do to our bodies, convey the Plague? The wicked are ſtill diſſwading us from this violence; they will ſay, it is preciſeneſs and ſingularity. As Chriſt's friends laid hold on him when he was going to preach,

Mark 3. 21. *They went out to lay hold on him; for they said, he is beside himself.* Such as are unacquainted with the spirituality and sweetness of Religion, judge all zeal phrensie; and therefore will lay hold upon us to hinder us in this sacred violence. When we are earnest suitors to *Piety*, our carnal friends will raise some ill report of it, and labour to break the match. *Galeazzo* Marquess of *Vico*, being resolved for Heaven, what a block in his way did he find his carnal Relations! and what pains had he to break through that impediment! Take heed of a snare in your bosom. This is one of the Devil's great subtilties, to hinder us from Religion by our nearest Relations, and so to shoot us with our own rib. He tempted *Adam* by his wife*, *Gen.* 3. 6. Who would have suspected the Devil there? He handed over a temptation to *Job* by his wife, *Job.* 2. 9. *Dost thou still retain thine integrity?* What notwithstanding all these disasters that have befallen thee, dost thou still pray, and serve God? Throw off his livery, *Curse God and die.* Thus would the Devil have cooled *Job*'s violence

* *Per eo-dem tempta-tionem petit eum.*

violence for Heaven; but the ſhield of his faith quenched this *fiery dart*. *Spira's* friends ſtood in his way to Heaven, for, adviſing with them about *Luther's* Doctrine, they perſwaded him to recant; and ſo openly abjuring his former faith, he felt an Hell in his conſcience: Take heed of ſuch tempters; reſolve to hold on your violence for Heaven, though your carnal friends diſſwade you. 'Tis better to go to Heaven with their hatred, than to Hell with their love. It was a ſaying of St. *Hierom*, If my Parents ſhould perſwade me to deny Chriſt; if my Mother ſhould ſhew me her breaſts that gave me ſuck; if my wife ſhould go to charme me with her embraces, I would forſake all and fly to Chriſt. If our deareſt friends alive would lie in our way to Heaven, we muſt either leap over them, or tread upon them.

* *Si mater mihi ubera oſtendat, &c.*

Take heed of letting up your ſtay in the loweſt pitch of grace. He that hath the leaſt grace, may have *motion*, but not *violence*. It is a pitiful thing to be contented with juſt ſo much grace as will keep life and ſoul 9.

* *Socordia animæ est di tre Sufficit mihi si salvet, quisque autem conari debet, ut in Cœlo sit primus.* Corn. à Lap.

together *. A sick man may have life, but is not lively. Grace may live in the heart, but is sickly, and doth not flourish into lively acts. Weak grace will not withstand strong temptations, or carry through great sufferings: it will hardly *follow Christ upon the water*. Little grace will not do God much service. A Tree that hath but little sap, will not have much fruit. It may be said of some Christians, though they are not *still born*, yet they are *starvelings* in grace: They are like a ship that comes with much ado to the Haven. Oh labour to grow to further degrees of sanctity. The more grace, the more strength; and the more strength, the more violence.

10. If you would be violent for Heaven, take heed of this opinion, That it is not so hard to get the Kingdom; less violence will serve turn. He that thinks he need not run a Race so fast, will be apt to slack his pace. This hath undone many. Who will take pains for Heaven, that thinks it may be had at a cheaper rate? But if it be

be ſo eaſie, what needs Chriſt ſay, *Strive as in an Agony.* What needed *Paul* beat down his body? Why doth the Text ſpeak of taking the Kingdom by force? Is not converſion called a *new birth? Joh.* 3. 7. a *Creation, Pſal.* 51. 10. and is that facil? O take heed of phancying that work eaſie which is both *above* nature, and *againſt* it. 'Tis as great a wonder for a ſoul to be ſaved, as to ſee a mill-ſtone to be lift up into the middle Region.

2. Uſe thoſe means which will promote this holy violence. 2. *Provocanda.*

1. Keep up daily prayer. Prayer is the bellows that blows up the affections; and a Chriſtian is moſt active, when his affections are moſt violent. Prayer keeps the trade of Religion agoing. Prayer is to the ſoul, as the animal ſpirits are to the body; the animal ſpirits make the body more agile and lively; ſo doth prayer the ſoul. That the motion of a Watch may be quicker, the ſpring muſt be wound up. Chriſtian, winde up thy heart every day by prayer. Prayer fetcheth in ſtrength from Chriſt; and when his ſtrength comes in, it ſets the ſoul a

working. Prayer leaves the heart in a good frame: As the morning Sun leaves a warmth in the room all the day after. When Christians lay aside prayer, or leave off fervency in it, then by degrees they lose their holy violence.

2. If you would be violent for Heaven, get under lively preaching. The word is *quick and powerful*, *Heb.* 4. 12. It puts life into a dead heart. It is both a sword to cut down sin, and a spur to quicken grace. The word is a fire to thaw a frozen heart, *Jer.* 23. 29. *Is not my Word fire?* As good almost be without preaching, as be under such preaching as will not warm. It is a part of the Word, not only to *inform*, but to *inflame*, *Psal.* 119. 50. *Thy Word hath quickened me.* 'Tis the lively dispensation of the Oracles of Heaven must animate us, and make us lively in our operation.

3. If you would be violent for Heaven, get your hearts filled with love to Religion. This is like the *Rod of Myrtle* in the Travellers hand, (*Pliny* speaks of,) which makes him fresh and lively in his travel, and keeps him from being weary. When a man hath warmed himself at

at the fire, now he is fittest for work. If you would be violent in working out salvation, warm your selves at this fire of love. A man will be violent for nothing but what he loves. Why are men so eager in their pursuit after gold, but because they love it. Love causeth delight, and delight causeth violence. What made St. *Paul* labour more than all the other Apostles? *The love of Christ constrained him*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 14. Love is like Oyl to the wheels. Get love to Religion, and you will never be weary; you will count those the best hours which are spent with God. He that digs in a silver Vein sweats, yet love to the silver makes his labour delightful.

4. If you would be violent, be vigilant. The Prophet stood upon his *Watch-tower* *, *Hab.* 2. 1. Why are Christians so listless in their work, but because they are so careless in their watch. Did they but watch to see how their enemy watcheth, they would be violent to resist him: Did they but watch to see how their time runs, or rather flies, they would be violent to redeem it: Did they but watch

* *Tempus excubiarum est vita.* Erasm. Origen.

watch to see how their hearts loiter in Religion, they would spur on faster to Heaven. The reason, there is so little violence in Religion, is, because there is so little vigilance. When Christians neglect their spiritual watch, and grow secure, now their motion to Heaven is retarded, and Satan's motions to sin are renewed. Our sleeping time, is Satan's tempting time.

5. If you would be violent for the Kingdom, bind your heart to God by sacred vows. A servant will be more diligent after he is bound to his Master. Vow to the Lord, that by his grace you will act more vigorously in the sphere of Religion, *Psalm* 56. 12. *Thy vows are upon me, O God.* A vow binds the votary to duty. He looks upon himself now as under a special obligation, and that quickens endeavour. No question but a Christian may make such a vow, because the ground of it is morally good; he vows nothing but what he is bound to do, namely, to walk more closely with God. Only remember, that we vow not in our own strength, but Christs. We must confide in him as well for *strength* as *righteousness*,

teousneſs, Iſa. 46. 24. *In the Lord I have righteouſneſs and ſtrength.*

If you would be violent for Heaven, be ſure you make going to Heaven your buſineſs. What a man looks on as a *παρεργον*, or thing by the *by*, he will never be violent for; but that which he makes his buſineſs, he will be induſtrious about. A man looks upon his trade as the only thing to get a livelihood by, and he follows it cloſe: So if we would but look upon Religion as the main buſineſs wherein our ſalvation is concerned, we ſhould be violent in it, *Luke* 10. 42. *But one thing is needfull.* This is the *One Thing*, to get Chriſt and Heaven *. This is the end we came into the world for. If we could thus look upon the things of eternity as our buſineſs, the *One Thing*, how earneſt ſhould we be in the purſuit of them! 6.

* unum eſt (ſi ſalvi eſſe velimus) quod omnia vobis incumbit, cura animarum pietatis, huic uni imminere vacat Maria, cujus fructus in æternum manſurus eſt. Cætera quæ curantur, caduca ſunt & ἐφήμερα. Grotius.

If you would be violent, have Heaven continually in your eye. This made Chriſt violent to the death; he had an eye to the joy ſet before him, 7.

Heb.

Heb. 12. 2. Set the Crown ever before you, and that will provoke endeavour.

——*immensum gloria calcar habet.*——

The Mariner hath his hand to the Sterh, and his eye to the Star. While we are working, let us have an eye to that place where is Christ the *bright morning star.* How willingly doth a man wade through a deep water, that sees the dry Land before him, and is sure to be crowned as soon as he comes at shore? Every time you cast your eye up to Heaven, think, above that starry Heaven is the Empyræan Heaven I am striving for. Thus did *Moses*; the eye of his faith quickned the feet of his obedience, *Heb.* 11. 26. *He looked to the recompence of Reward.* When Christians lose their prospect of Heaven, then they begin to slacken their pace in the way thither.

8. If you would be violent for the Kingdom, accompany with such as are violent. When we want fire, we use to go to our neighbours hearth and fetch

fetch fire. Often be among the godly, and ſo you ſhall fetch ſome heat and quickning from them, *Pſal.* 119.63. *I am a companion of all them that fear thee**. Good company quickens. The holy diſcourſe and example of one Saint, doth whet and ſharpen another. The Saints never go ſo faſt to Heaven, as when they go in company. One Chriſtian helps forward another. In other Races that are run, many times one hinders another; but in this Race to Heaven, one Chriſtian helps forward another, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 11. *Edifie one another, even as alſo ye do.* O let not this Article of our Creed be forgotten, *The Communion of Saints.*

* חבר אני *Adjunxi me.* Vatablus.

If you would be violent, never leave till you have the Spirit. Deſire of God to put forth the ſweet violence of his Spirit; the Spouſe begg'd a gale of the Spirit, *Cant.* 4. 16. *Awake O North-wind, blow a South.* When God's Spirit blows upon us, now we go full ſail to Heaven. When the Spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels, then they moved, *Ezek.* 1. 21. The wheels of our endeavour move apace, when the Spirit of God is in theſe wheels. 9.

Seeing

Seeing there are ſo many violent winds of temptation blowing us backward, we had need have the violent wind of God's Spirit blowing us forward to Heaven. Let this ſuffice to have ſpoken of the means for this holy violence.

But may ſome ſay, we have uſed this violence for Heaven, what remains for us to do? As the people ſaid to Chriſt, *Luke* 1. 13. *What ſhall we do?*

You that have been violent for Heaven (aged Chriſtians) let me beſeech you ſtill to keep alive this holy violence. Not only keep up duty, but violence in duty. Remember, you have that corruption within you, which is ready to abate this bleſſed violence. The brighteſt coal hath thoſe aſhes growing on it, as is apt to choak the fire. You have thoſe inbred corruptions, that like aſhes, are ready to choak the fire of your zeal. How was *Peter's* grace cooled when he denied Chriſt! The Church of *Epheſus* loſt her keen edge of Religion, *Rev.* 2. 4. Take heed of declining in your affections. Be not like a body in an atrophy: be moſt

moſt violent at laſt. A ſtone, the nearer it is to the center, the more violent it is in its motion. You have but a little time now to work for God, therefore work the harder. Be like the Church of *Thyatira*, Her *laſt works were more than her firſt* *, *Rev.* 2. 19. Be as the Sun that ſhines brighteſt before its ſetting: As the Swan that ſings ſweeteſt before its death, *Rom.* 13. 11. *Your ſalvation is nearer than when you believed.* If your ſalvation be nearer, your violence ſhould be greater. How ſhould you quicken your pace, when you are within ſight of the Kingdom! He is an happy man, of whom it may be ſaid, ſpiritually, as of *Moſes* literally before his death, *Deut.* 34. 7. *His eyes waxed not dim, and his natural force was not abated.* So a Chriſtian's force and violence for Heaven is not abated: He keeps the beſt wine of his life till the laſt.

* *Egregia laus non modò non ſatiſcere, ſed indies proficere in melius.* Grotius.

Here is ſtrong conſolation to the violent Chriſtian; thou art in the way to the Kingdom. Though perhaps thou haſt not a bunch of Grapes in the way,

Uſe 6. Conſolat.

way, (I mean that joy which some meet with) yet it is happy that thou art in the way. Bless God that while some lye in the total neglect of duty, God hath given thee an heart to seek him, *Psal.* 105. 3. *Let the hearts of them rejoyce that seek the Lord.* Nay, God hath not only given thee an heart to do duty, but to do duty mixed with love, which makes it *savoury meat*; and do duty stamped with fervency, which makes it pass currant with God. O bless God who hath raised thee off the bed of sloth, and stirred up the zeal of thy soul for Heaven. He who hath made thee *violent*, will make thee *victorious*. Wait awhile, and thou shalt be possessed of a Kingdom. When *Moses* went up to receive God's Commands, he staid six daies on the Mount, and on the seventh day, God called to him, *Exod.* 24. 16. Though we wait long, and have not the thing waited for, yet let us continue doing our duty; shortly, God will call us from Heaven, *Come up hither*, and we shall go from the Mount of *Faith*, to the Mount of *Vision*, and behold those glorious things which

eye hath not seen, nor can it enter into man's heart to conceive.

But, may a child of God say, I fear I am none of those violent ones that shall take Heaven: I find such a deadness of heart in duty, that I question whether I shall ever arrive at the Kingdom. *Object.*

This deadness of the heart may arise from natural causes. Weakness of body may occasion indisposition of mind. Thy prayer may be weak, because thy body is weak. A Lute that is cracked cannot send forth so sweet a sound as if it were whole. *Resp.*

2. This indisposition of soul perhaps is only casual, and for a time; it may be in a deep fit of melancholy, or in desertion. When the Sun is gone from our climate, the earth is as it were in desertion, and the trees are without blossom or fruit; but this is only for a time: Let but the Sun return again in Spring, and now the herbs flourish, and the trees put forth their fruit: So when God hides his face, there is a deadness upon a Christian's heart; he prayes *as if he prayed not*: But let the Sun of Righteousness return, now he is divinely animated, and is as vigorous

and lively in his operation as ever, he now recovers his *first love.* Therefore thou weak Christian, be not discouraged, so long as thou dost not allow thy self in thy distemper; a dead heart is thy burden, look up to Christ thy High-Priest, who is merciful to bear with thy infirmities, and is mighty to help them.

THE

THE HAPPINESS OF Drawing near to GOD.

PSALM 73. 28.

But it is good for me to draw near to God.

THis Psalm is no less elegant than sacred: It is calculated for the Meridian of God's Church in all times; but especially it is fit for the godly to meditate upon in times of calamity. It is intitled *a Psalm of Asaph* *. *Asaph* was a * man divinely inspired, a *Prophet*; as also one of the Masters of musick; * Moderns.

It is called *a Psalm of Asaph*, either because he composed it, or because it was committed to him to sing*. This holy man here seems to have a dialogue with himself concerning providence. He was ready to call God's providences to the bar of reason, and enquire the equity of them. How doth it seem just, that they who are evil should enjoy so much good; and they who are good should endure so much evil*? While *Asaph* was debating the case with himself, at last his faith got above his sense; he considered that the wicked were set *in locis lubricis, in slippery places*. And like such as go upon Ice, their feet would soon slide; or like such as walk on Mines of Powder, they would soon be blown up, *Verse* 18. This did both resolve his doubt, and compose his spirit.

* *Traditus ipsi Asaph, canori, decantandus.* Vatablus.

* *Impii in dictate fortunæ ad iactantiam usque sibi placent, & miseriis plerumque subjacent pii,* Munst. Clarius.

The proæmium or entrance into the Psalm, is not to be forgotten; *Truly God is good to Israel*; so the Hebrew renders it, *certainly** : Without dispute, this is a golden maxim must be held.

* אך טוב

In the *Septuagint* it is *vox admirantis*, it

it is set out by way of admiration, *O how good is God to Israel* !* What Angel in Heaven can expteſs ! The vulgar reads it, *veruntamen*, *yet*, God is good; as if the *Psalmist* had said, though the Candle of prosperity shines on the wicked, they have not only what their heart can wish, but *more than heart can wish, Verse 7.* And though the godly are sorely afflicted, mingling their drink with weeping; yet for all this, *God is good to Israel.* Here is the *Fountain*, the *Stream*, the *Cistern*: the Fountain, *God*; the Stream, *Goodness*; the *Cistern* into which it runs, *Israel.* Indeed God is good *to all*, *Psal.* 145. 9. The sweet dew falls upon the Thistle as well as the Rose. But though God be good to all, yet not *alike* good to all. He is good to *Israel* in a special manner. The wicked have *sparing* mercy, but the godly have *saving* mercy. And if God be good to his people, then it is good for his people to draw near to him. So it is in the Text, *It is good for me to draw near to God.*

* ὡς ἀγαθὸς ὁ θεὸς!

1. We may look upon the words 1.
in *Hypothesi*; here is something implied, *viz.* that by nature we are far off from God. *Drawing near* implies a strangeness

and distance. In our lapsed estate we lost two things, the image of God, and communion with God, *Psal* 58. 3. *The wicked are estranged from the womb.* Every step a sinner takes, is a going further from God. The *Prodigal's* going into a *far Country*, *Luke* 15. 14. was an emblem of the sinner's going afar off from God. How far are they distant from God, who have been travelling forty or fifty years from their Father's house! and which is worse, sinner's are not only far from God, but they do not desire to be near him, *Jer.* 4. 10. *They have loved to wander*; Sin doth not care to be near holiness. The wicked get as far as they can from God: Like *Cain*, who *went out from the presence of the Lord*, *Gen.* 4. 16. That is the Church of God, where were the visible signs of God's presence: he estranged himself from God as much as he could: he *fell to building*, thereby thinking to drown the noise of his conscience, as the *Italians* of old were wont to drown the noise of Thunder by ringing their Bells. Sinner's think God's company may be best spared, *Isaiah* 30. 11. *Cause the Holy one of Israel*

Israel to cease from before me. Let us shut God out of our company; let him be no more named among us. A bad eye loves not to be near the Sun.

Let us be deeply humbled for our fall in *Adam*, which hath set us at such a distance from the blessed God. Heaven and Earth are not so far asunder as God and the sinner. The further we are from God, the nearer we are to Hell. The further a man sails from the East, the nearer he is to the West. Let us think of returning to God by Repentance. Say as the Church, *Hos.* 2. 7. *I will go and return to my first Husband, for then was it better with me than now.* Use.

2. Let us consider the text in *Thes*; *It is good for me to draw near to God.* 2.

The text falls into these parts.

1. The Person, *me.*
2. The Act, *draw near.*
3. The Object, *God.*
4. The excellency of the Act, *it is good.*

The Proposition is this,

That it is a great duty incumbent upon Christians to draw near to God.

Heb. 10. 22, *Let us draw near with a true heart.* For the illustration of the Proposition, four things are to be enquired into.

1. How we are capable of drawing near to God.

2. Where we draw near to God.

3. The manner of our drawing near to God.

4. Why we must draw near to God.

1. 1. How we are capable of drawing near to God. By nature we stand in opposition to God, *Col.* 1. 21. *alienated and enemies.* How then can we approach nigh to God? *Answ.* It is through a Mediatour *. Out of Christ God *is a consuming fire*, *Heb.* 12. 29. But Jesus Christ is the screen between us and divine Justice. Christ as our High Priest assumes our flesh. Christ's flesh is called a *vail*, *Heb.* 10. 20. As *Moses* when his face shone so exceeding bright, put a vail upon it, and then *Israel* might approach near to him, and look upon him: So Christ having vailed himself with our humane nature, we may now draw nigh to God and behold him.

* *Ipse solus est cujus gratia Deum habemus propitium.* Calv.

And

And as Christ makes way for us into the Holy of Holies by his *Incarnation*; so by his *Crucifixion*: he died to make God and us friends. The Divine Law being infringed, God's Justice was provoked, and satisfaction demanded, before we could approach to God in an amicable way. Now here Christ as our Priest shed his blood for our sins, and so made the attonement, *Col.* 1. 20. *Having made peace through the blood of his Cross* *. As *Joseph* being so great at Court, made way for all his Brethren to draw near into the King's presence, *Gen.* 47. 2. So Jesus Christ is our *Joseph*, that doth make way for us by his blood, that we may now come near into Gods presence. Through Christ God is pleased with us; he holds forth the *golden Scepter*, that we may draw near, and touch the top of the Scepter.

* *Pignus & pretium nostræ cum Deo pacificationis fuit sanguis Christi.* Calvin.

2. Where we draw near to God. 2.

Answ. In the use of his Ordinances. In the Word we draw near to his *Holy Oracle*; in the Sacrament we draw near to his *Table*. In the one we hear his voice; in the other we have his kiss.

Besides

Besides, we do in a special manner draw near to God in Prayer. Prayer is the soul's private converse and intercourse with * God. Prayer whispers in God's ears, *Psal.* 18. 6. *My prayer came before him, even into his ears.* In prayer we draw so near to God, that we *take hold of him*, *Isa.* 64. 6. God draws nigh to us by his Spirit, and we draw nigh to him in prayer.

* Πᾶς προσευχόμενος, τῷ θεῷ διαλέγεται. *Chrys.*

3. 3. The *modus*, or manner of our drawing near to God. God's special residence is in Heaven, and we draw near to God not by the feet of our *bodies*, but our *souls* *. The affections are the *feet of the soul*; by these we move towards God. *David* drew nigh to God in his desires, *Psalm* 73. 25. *There is none in earth I desire besides thee.* He did shoot his heart into Heaven by pious ejaculations. Spirits may have intercourse at a distance.

* Non gressibus corpus, sed animi.

4. 4. Why we must draw near to God.

1. Because he is our Maker *, *in him we live.* He hath given us our bodies; they are his curious *needle work*, *Psal.* 139. 15. And as he hath wrought the Cabinet; so he hath put the Jewel in it, the precious soul; and surely if we had

* Psalm 100, 3.

had our being from him: we cannot breathe without him: there is good reason we should draw near to him in a way of homage and observance.

God is our Benefactor; he crowns us with variety of blessings; he gives health and estate; every bit of bread we eat is reached to us by the hand of Divine Bounty. Is there not great reason we should draw near to him that feeds us? Give a beast provender, and he will follow you all the field over. Not to draw near to him who is our Benefactor, is worse than brutish. 2.

God is the *summum bonum*, the chief good. There's enough in God to satisfie the immense desire of the Angels. He is *omnimode dulcis*, the quintessence of sweetness; in him all perfections are concentred, wisdom, holiness, goodness: he hath *rivers of pleasure*, where the soul shall bathe its self for ever with infinite delight, *Psal.* 36. So that here is ground sufficient for our drawing near to God; he is the *chief good* *. Every thing desires to approach to its happiness. 3.

* *Bonum is quo omnia bona.*

1. See the right *genius* and temper of Use 1.

of a gracious soul, is is ever drawing near to God; it loves to converse with him in private. A person truly regenerate is not able to stay away long from God, *Psal.* 63. 8. *My soul followeth hard after God.* A pious soul cannot but draw near to God.

1. Out of the intire love which he bears to God. 'Tis the nature of love to draw the heart to the object loved. He that loves his friend will often give him a visit: He that loves God will visit him. The heart ascends to God in a *fiery Chariot* of love.

2. A gracious soul cannot but draw near to God, because of the intimate relation between God and him. God is a Father, *Isa.* 64. 8. *Doubtless thou art our Father.* Doth not the child delight to draw near to his Father? No Father like to God for love *: his children shall never want: he hath Land enough to give to all his heirs. He loves his children so intirely, that he will never dis-inherit them*. How then can Believers keep away from their Father? they know not how to be long out of his presence.

* Πατὴρ οἰκτιρμῶν. 2 Cor. 1. 3.

* Joh. 13. 1.

3. A gracious soul cannot chuse but draw

draw near to God, because he hath found so much sweetness and content in it. While he hath drawn near to God, he hath drawn virtue from him. Never did *Jonathan* taste so much sweetness when he dipp'd his Rod in the hony-comb, 1 *Sam.* 14. 27. as the soul finds in communion with God. In drawing near to God, a Christian's heart hath been warmed and melted; the Lord hath kindled his sacrifice from Heaven. In his approaches to God, he hath had the illapses of the Spirit, the incomes of Gods love, the prælibations of glory: God hath given him a *bunch of Grapes* by the way; he hath *tasted that the Lord is good* *; no wonder then he is so frequent in his approaches to the divine Majesty; he hath found the comfort of drawing near to God.

* Psal. 34. 8.

2. It reproves them, who instead of drawing near to God, draw near to the world. The world ingrosseth all their time and thoughts, *Phil.* 3. 19. *Who mind earthly things.* A good Christian useth the world for his necessity, but his main work is to draw near to God. Whoever he compounds with, and paies short; he will be sure God shall not be a loser. He

Use 1. Reproof. 1. Branch.

gives

gives God a daily sacrifice; *he follows God fully, Numb.* 14. 14. But covetous persons make the world their treasure, and what is their treasure, that doth most command their hearts. Worldlings live *by sense*; and to talk to them of drawing nigh to God, is to speak riddles and paradoxes to them. They can no more live out of the *earth*, than the fish out of the *water*. They have the Serpent's curse upon them *to lick the dust*. Things of a worldly aspect draw away the heart from God. They are *retinacula spei* (as *Tertullian* saith) they hinder our passage to the holy Land. Had not the fall beat off mens head-piece of wisdom, they would think thus with themselves, If there be any beauty in the world, what is there in God that made it? he gives the flower its colour and odour; he gives the diamond its lustre; he gives food its delicious taste; and if there be such sweetness in creatures, what is there in God? he is infinitely better than all. Shall these poor things draw off our hearts from God? shall the drop draw us from the fountain? shall the light of the Taper draw us from the Sun? shall we admire the gift, and forget the giver? *Solomon* speaks

* *Quod de-fuit tale, id est magis tale.*

speaks of a generation of men, *madness is in their heart*, *Eccl.* 9. 3. Sure they who draw near the world, and leave God, *madness is in their heart*. O how empty and insignificant are all other things without God! they are in their matter earthly, in their procuring painful, in their fruition surfeiting, in their duration dying, in their operation damning.

2. It reproves them who draw nigh to God, but it is hypocritically; they draw nigh with their *lips*, but not with their *hearts*, *Isa.* 29. 13. The Jews (saith one) use great shews of adoration, and in their Synagogues burn Lamps to the honour of God*, but no inward devotion can be perceived. What is *pomp* without *piety*? Sinners give God the worship of their bodies, but keep their hearts for something else they love better. The heart is a Virgin God himselelf is Suitor to, *Pro.* 23. 26. *My Son give me thy heart**. To draw near to God with the body, but not the heart, is to abuse God. 'Tis as if one should come into an Apothecaries shop and ask for cordial water, and he should give him an empty glass. To draw nigh to God without an heart, is to play a devotion, and to go to Hell covered with Religion's mantle.

2: Branch.

* Europi Spec.

* *Cor dum nobis nobi-lius.* Bern.

3. It

3. Branch. 3. It reproves them who instead of drawing near to God, draw back from God: these are Renegadoes; they once seemed to put forth their blossoms, and gave good hope of their conversion, but their *Spring* is changed to *Autumn*. Either fear of persecution, or hope of preferment hath turned them away from the profession of Religion. Such were *Bolsecus, Petrus Carolus*, and others *, *Hos.* 8. 3. *Israel hath cast off the thing that is good.* At *Ausborough* the Papists give *ten florens* a year to such as revolt from the Protestant Faith. Men draw back from God, because they never had the Spirit of God to confirm them. Such as have the Spirit's indwelling, never take their final leave of God. The Spirit in the heart is called an *earnest* *, not a *pawn*. A pawn may be called for again, and taken away, but an *earnest* remains, and is part of the summ behind. O how odious is it to draw back from God! The name *Judas* is had in abomination at this day. Sure no Protestant would baptize his child *Judas*. And how dismal was his end! he who had no bowels to an innocent Christ, his bowels gushed out. If it be good to draw near to God, it must

* *Ad Calvin non vitio dat.*

* 2 Cor. 1. 22.

must needs be evil to draw back from him, *Psal.* 37. 27. *Thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee.*

3. It exhorts us all to draw near to God. 'Tis more ingenious to draw near to God voluntarily, than to be drawn near to him by affliction. God is the *terminus ad quem*; whither should the soul go but to God? where can the Bee rest but in its hive? To draw near to God is as well a *priviledge* as a *duty*. There are but two Motives I shall use to perswade to this drawing near to God. Use 3. Exhortation.

1. The first is in the text; to draw near to God is a good thing. *'Tis good for me.* That it is *good*, appears several waies. 1. Motive.

To draw near to God, is our wisdom. *The price of Wisdom is above Rubies*, *Job.* 28. 18. No Jewel we wear doth so adorn us as wisdom; and wherein is our wisdom seen more than in our appropinquation to God? 'Tis judged wisdom to keep in with great men, *Prov.* 19. 6. *Many will intreat the favour of the Prince.* A Prince's love is mutable. How often doth the sun-shine of his royal favour set in a cloud. But it is wisdom to draw near to God, he is the sweetest friend, and the sorest enemy. I.

2. To draw near to God is our honour. It is counted an honour to converse with noble personages. What an high dignity is it, that the great God will suffer sinful dust to draw near to him! Surely the Apostle did speak it with an holy boasting, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. *Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus*: As if he had said, we do not walk with the Pedanticks of the world; we are of the blood-royal of Heaven; we live above other men; *Our fellowship is with the Father.* That the King of Kings will hold forth a *Golden Scepter* to us, invite and welcome us into his presence, and bid us draw near; this is no small favour, 1 *Sam.* 22. 2. *Every one that was distressed and in debt, drew near to David, and he became a Captain over them.* So that we who are distressed and in debt, may draw near to God; and that he will not only be our *Captain*, but our *Husband*, *Isa.* 54. 5. What transcendent dignity is this! It is a wonder God doth not kick us out of his presence, but that we should be admitted to *see the King's face*; and that he should send us dainties off from his own table, is an honour fitter for Angels than men.

3. To draw near to God is *our safety*: God

is

is a *strong Tower*, *Prov.* 18. 10.* It is good in times of danger to draw near to a Fort or Castle, *Hab.* 3. 4. *He had horns coming out of his hands, and there was the hiding of his power.* The *horns coming out of God's hands*, are to push his enemies; and *the hiding of his power*, is to safeguard his people. God is an impregnable strong hold. Indeed there is no safety, but in drawing nigh to God. If the sheep straggles from the fold, it is in danger of the Wolf; if we straggle and wander from God, we are in danger of Satan.

* מגדל עז *Metaphora à terreis propugnaculis ad Deum transfata, qui asylum est eorum qui ad illum confugiunt.* Cartwr.

To draw near to God is our peace. 4. The only thing which breaks our peace, is, when we do not keep close to God: but what harmony, yea Heaven is in the soul when it draws nigh to God! *Psal.* 119. 165. *Great peace have they that love thy Law.* This peace like Pearl in broth is cordial. *David* drew nigh to God, for he was *ever with him*, *Psal.* 139. 17. And this made his pillow soft when he went to sleep, *Psal.* 4. 8. *I will lay me down in peace.** As the hony-dew falls upon the leaf; O that sweet serenity which drops as hony upon the soul, while it is drawing nigh to God! How comfortable is it to draw near the Sun! and how sweet

* בשלום יחדיו

is it to approach nigh to the *Sun of Righteousness*!

5. To draw near to God is our riches. 'Tis good drawing near a golden Mine. If we draw near to God, he will enrich us with promises, and divine consolations; he will enrich us with the *Pearl of price*, *Ephes.* 3. 8. He will reward us as a *King*, yea, as a *God*. He will make over his Land and Jewels to us; he will give us the spring-flowers of joy here, and the harvest of glory hereafter.

6. If we draw near to God, he will draw near to us*. If we draw near to him in duty, he will draw near to us in mercy. When the Prodigal approached to his Father, his Father drew near to him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, *Luke* 15. 20. If we draw near to God with repenting hearts, he will draw near to us with a compassionate heart. *David* prayed, *Psal.* 69. 18. *Draw nigh to my soul.* It is good to have God draw nigh to us. How sweet is his presence! he is light to the eye, joy to the heart. How happy was it for *Zacheus*, when Christ drew near to him! *This day is salvation come to thy house*, *Luke* 19. 9. When God draws near to the soul, Heaven and salvation draw near.

* Jam. 4. 8.

2. There

2. There is a time coming, when we shall wish we had drawn near to God. We are shortly drawing near to our grave, *Psalm* 107. 18. *They draw near unto the gates of death.* The wicked who care not for God, yet at death they would draw near to him. then they cry as *Matth.* 8. 25. *Lord save us, or we perish*; Then *mercy, mercy*! They run to God in distress, as in a storm men run to a tree for shelter. But God will not shelter his enemies. The Lord gives the sinner abundance of mercy in his life time, (as you have seen a loving Father bribing a Prodigal Son with money to see if he can reclaim him) but if the sinner be not wrought upon with mercy, then at death the Sun of mercy sets, and a dark night of wrath overtakes the sinner. They who would not draw nigh to God as a friend, God will draw nigh to them as an enemy. 2. Motive

How shall we do to draw near to God? Quest.

Let us contemplate the excellencies of God. He is the *God of Glory*, Answ.

Psalm 29. 3. full of orient beauty: in comparison of whom both Angels and men are but as *the small dust of the balance* *. He is the *God of love*, 2 Cor. 13. 11. who triumphs in acts of mercy. Well may this incourage our approaches to him who delights to display the banner of free-grace to sinners. If we should hear of a person of Honour, who were of a lovely disposition, obliging all that came to him by acts of kindness and civility, it would make us ambitiously desirous to ingratiate our selves with him, and get into his acquaintance. God is the most soveraign good, the wonder of love, ready to diffuse the silver streams of his bounty to indigent creatures *; this if any thing will make us willing to draw near to him, and acquiesce in him as the center of felicity.

Πλήγαι δὲ ἰσχυραὶ κακοῦργον. Trigmeg.

* Psal. 86. 5.

2. If we would draw near to God, let us study our own wants. Let us consider in what need we stand of God, and that we cannot be happy without him. The Prodigal never drew near to his Father, till he *began to be in want*, Luke 15. A proud sinner who was never

never convinced of his want, minds not to come near God; he hath a stock of his own to live upon, *Jer.* 2. 31. *We are Lords, we will come no more unto thee.* A full stomach despiseth the honey-comb. 'Tis the sense of want brings us near to God. Why did so many lame and paralytical resort to Christ, but because they wanted a cure? Why doth the thirsty man draw near a fountain, but because he wants water. Why doth a condemned man draw near his Prince, but because he wants a pardon. When a poor soul reviews its wants, I want grace, I want the favour of God, I am damned without Christ; this makes him draw near to God, and be an earnest supplicant for mercy.

If we would draw near to God, let 3.
it be our care to clear our interest in God, *Heb.* 10. 22. *Let us draw near in full assurance of Faith.* When we know him to be our God, then we draw near to him. The Spouse by virtue of the conjugal union, draws near to her Husband, *Psalm* 48. 14. *This God is our God.*

Let us beg the holy Spirit. The Spi- 4.
rit of God hath a magnetical virtue.

Corruption

Corruption draws the heart from God, the Spirit draws it to him, *Cant.* 1. 4. *Draw me, we will run after thee.* The Spirit by his Omnipotent grace, draws the heart to God *suaviter*, but *fortiter*, *sweetly*, but *powerfully*.

5. Let us get our hearts fired with love to God: which way the love goes, that way the heart is drawn. If God be the treasure delighted in, our hearts will be drawn to him. Servile fear makes the soul fly from God, sacred love makes it fly to him.

FINIS.